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[ISSUED SATURDAY, 6TH AUGUST, 1921.]

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA. *Parliament*

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

FIRST SESSION, 1920-21.

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EIGHTH PARLIAMENT.

FIRST SESSION.

Governor-General.*

His Excellency the Right Honorable HENRY WILLIAM, BARON FORSTER, a Member of His Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Commonwealth of Australia.

* From 6th October, 1920.

Australian National Government.

(From 10th January, 1918.)

Prime Minister and Attorney-General ..	The Right Honorable William Morris Hughes, P.C., K.C.
Minister for the Navy ..	The Right Honorable Sir Joseph Cook, P.C., G.C.M.G. <i>Succeeded by</i> The Honorable W. H. Laird Smith (25th July, 1920). <i>Succeeded by</i> The Right Honorable Lord Forrest, P.C., G.C.M.G. <i>Succeeded by</i> The Right Honorable William Alexander Watt, P.C. (27th March, 1918).†††
Treasurer ..	The Right Honorable Sir Joseph Cook, P.C., G.C.M.G. (28th July, 1920). The Honorable George Foster Pearce. The Honorable Edward Davis Millen. The Right Honorable William Alexander Watt, P.C. <i>Succeeded by</i> The Honorable Littleton Ernest Groom (27th March, 1918). The Honorable Patrick McMahon Glynn, K.C.††
Minister for Home and Territories ..	The Honorable Alexander Poynton (4th February, 1920). The Honorable Jens August Jensen.† <i>Succeeded by</i> The Right Honorable William Alexander Watt, P.C. (13th December, 1918). <i>Succeeded by</i> The Honorable Walter Massy Greene (17th January, 1919). The Honorable William Webster.†††
Minister for Trade and Customs ..	The Honorable George Henry Wise (4th February, 1920). The Honorable Walter Massy Greene (10th March, 1921). The Honorable Littleton Ernest Groom. <i>Succeeded by</i> The Honorable Edward John Russell (27th March, 1918). The Honorable Edward John Russell. Appointed Vice-President of the Executive Council, 27th March, 1918.
Postmaster-General ..	The Honorable Alexander Poynton. Appointed Minister for Home and Territories, 4th February, 1920. The Honorable George Henry Wise. Appointed Postmaster-General, 4th February, 1920. The Honorable Walter Massy Greene.* Appointed Minister for Trade and Customs, 17th January, 1919.
Minister for Health ..	The Honorable Richard Beaumont Orchard.**
Vice-President of the Executive Council ..	The Honorable Sir Granville de Laune Kyrie, K.C.M.G., C.B., V.D.†† The Honorable William Henry Laird Smith.†† Appointed Minister for the Navy, 28th July, 1920. The Honorable Arthur Stanislaus Rodgers.***
Honorary Minister ..	
Honorary Minister ..	
Honorary Minister ..	
Honorary Minister ..	
Honorary Minister ..	
Honorary Minister ..	
Honorary Minister ..	
Honorary Minister ..	

* Appointed 26th March, 1918.—† Removed from office, 13th December, 1918.—** Resigned office, 31st January, 1919.—†† Appointed 4th February, 1920.—††† Resigned 3rd February, 1920.—†††† Resignation from office gazetted, 15th June, 1920.—*** Appointed 23th July, 1920.

Senators.

(From 1st July, 1920.)

President—Senator the Honorable Thomas Givens.

Chairman of Committees—Senator Thomas Jerome Kingston Bakhap.

*Adamson, John, C.B.E. (Q.)	*Glasgow, Sir Thomas William, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D. (Q.)
Bakhap, Thomas Jerome Kingston (T.)	*Guthrie, James Francis (V.)
*Benny, Benjamin (S.A.)	*Guthrie, Robert Storrie (S.A.)
Bolton, William Kinsey, C.B.E., V.D. (V.)	Henderson, George (W.A.)
³ Buzacott, Richard (W.A.)	Keating, Hon. John Henry (T.)
*Cox, Charles Frederick, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D. (N.S.W.)	*Lynch, Patrick Joseph (W.A.)
Crawford, Thomas William (Q.)	Millen, Hon. Edward Davis (N.S.W.)
De Largie, Hon. Hugh (W.A.)	*Millen, John Dunlop (T.)
*Drake-Brockman, Edmund Alfred, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O. (W.A.)	¹ *Newland, John, C.B.E. (S.A.)
*Duncan, Walter Leslie (N.S.W.)	*Payne, Hon. Herbert James Mockford (T.)
Earle, Hon. John (T.)	² Pearce, Hon. George Foster (W.A.)
*Elliott, Harold Edward, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., D.C.M. (V.)	¹ Plain, William (V.)
Fairbairn, George (V.)	Pratten, Herbert Edward (N.S.W.)
Foll, Hattil Spencer (Q.)	Reid, Matthew (Q.)
² Foster, George Matthew (T.)	¹ Rowell, James, C.B., V.D. (S.A.)
*Gardiner, Albert (N.S.W.)	*Russell, Hon. Edward John (V.)
*Givens, Hon. Thomas (Q.)	Senior, William (S.A.)
	Thomas, Hon. Josiah (N.S.W.)
	⁵ Vardon, Edward Charles (S.A.)
	*Wilson, Reginald Victor (S.A.)

1. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 21st July, 1920.—2. Elected 13th December, 1919. Sworn 21st July, 1920.—3. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 26th February, 1920.—4. Deceased reported, 6th April, 1921.—5. Appointed by State Governor in Council, 18th February, 1921. Sworn 6th April, 1921.
* Elected 13th December, 1919. Sworn 1st July, 1920.

commodity worth £5,000,000, all of which is consumed in Australia, may surely be claimed to be of greater national value than one whose product must be exported to find a market.

Senator WILSON.—That is true, so long as the home-consumed product is not expected to be spoon-fed at the expense of industries which are obliged to seek overseas markets.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Senator Wilson has referred more than once to industries which seek overseas markets, and which are dependent on the world's parity. May I ask to what extent the factors mentioned apply to the products of his own State, excepting wheat and wool?

Senator WILSON.—To practically all of them.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Prior to the war it was the practice of the Dried Fruit-growers' Association to decide what quantity of currants, raisins, and the like should be exported at, say, 3d. per lb., and what quantity should be retained for home consumption at a charge to the Australian consumer amounting to about three times as much.

Senator E. D. MILLEN.—The dried fruit-growers learned those tactics from the sugar people.

Senator CRAWFORD.—The sugar producers have never had anything to export.

Senator E. D. MILLEN.—The honorable senator knows the movement to which I refer.

Senator CRAWFORD.—I confess that I do not.

Senator E. D. MILLEN.—In anticipation of a surplus, the people interested proposed the very procedure to which the honorable senator has just referred. Nature robbed them of a surplus, and the procedure was not put into practice; but that fact does not expunge the intention from the records.

Senator CRAWFORD.—I have no recollection of the matter. It must have developed before I was connected with the sugar industry, which dates back for only about twenty-six years.

Senator E. D. MILLEN.—It was in more recent days than that.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Although Australia grows many hundreds of thousands of tons of hay, I do not know that any is exported. The home market is just as valuable as any foreign market.

Senator WILSON.—The home market is the king of markets.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Then, why should fault be found with an industry which seeks and finds its market at home?

Senator WILSON.—No one is finding fault with the industry; the fault is found with the price.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Like many another southerner, the honorable senator believes in a White Australia; but, again like many another southerner, he is not prepared to pay anything for his principles. It is most unfortunate that the true attitude of the southern Australian was not made as clear to the people of Queensland before they entered Federation as it has been made over and over again since the union. Queensland came in at the last moment, and very reluctantly; and a majority of the people have since regretted that they ever took the step.

Senator LYNCH.—Would Queensland not have been very much worse off if she had remained aloof?

Senator CRAWFORD.—No! There is no reason why she should have come in. Unlike every other State, Queensland could be, if she wished, self-contained and self-supporting. Within her boundaries there is practically every range of climate known throughout the Commonwealth.

Senator VARDON.—How can the honorable senator argue as he is doing when it is obvious that Queensland could not produce sugar as she does but for the market which the other States afford?

Senator CRAWFORD.—If Queensland were not hampered by her position as a party to the Federation, she would soon possess a population which alone would be sufficient to consume more sugar than is produced at present. However, there are broader aspects than have yet been touched upon. It is necessary that Australia should produce all her own requirements. Sugar is one of these essentials. Germany has recognised that. Throughout a long period of years that nation directed its sugar policy with a

view to destroying the cane-sugar industry of all other countries. In 1896, Germany went so far as to impose an import duty of no less than £20 a ton, and arranged for the payment of a bounty on export of £10 a ton. But for the action of the United States of America in immediately imposing a countervailing duty on bounty-fed sugar and subsequently arranging to give a 20 per cent. preference to Cuba—which policy was followed by all the other interested nations sending representatives to the Brussels Convention of 1902—such inroads would have been made upon the cane-sugar industry that the world, in all probability, would have been without sugar upon the outbreak of war in 1914. The high military authorities who grace the Senate will readily agree that, from a military point of view, it would be a serious matter if troops had to fight without their ordinary sugar ration.

I am not asking for anything unreasonable. If the sugar industry is to be protected only to the extent of something under 1d. per lb., such protection will be lower than that enjoyed by most of Australia's other industries. Australian wines have been given protection ranging from 12s. to 28s. per gallon. I understand that before the war a very good wine could be bought in bulk for 3s. or 4s. per gallon. That means that the protection accorded to the wine industry is equal to an *ad valorem* duty of from 200 to 300 per cent. Surely an industry which is peculiar to practically one State is entitled to as much consideration as if it were common to all. If each of the States were producing some 10,000 to 15,000 tons of beet sugar per annum, there would be no difficulty in persuading Parliament of the fairness of what I ask. I do not know why consumers are so much afraid of having to pay 1d. per lb., more or less, extra for their sugar. I am not an ancient, but I can remember when sugar was sold for 4d., 5d., and 6d. per lb. in this country, and the article was considerably inferior to that supplied to the public to-day. Moreover, the people in those times were not nearly as well off, in the main, as nowadays.

Senator BENNY.—What proportion of the sugar consumed in Australia can Queensland produce?

Senator Crawford.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Under adequate protection, Queensland could produce sufficient to supply a population of 50,000,000 people.

Senator RUSSELL.—Queensland will produce this year 850,000 tons.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Not so much as that, I fear. But Queensland could easily grow five or six times as much as she does to-day. We have the land—millions of good acres—capable also of sustaining a very large population. I shall harvest this year only 130 acres of cane, but my wages bill will run into the neighbourhood of £4,000. That will give the Committee an idea of what it costs.

Senator BOLTON.—Your return will be £60 an acre, at 2 tons to the acre.

Senator CRAWFORD.—The cane has to be taken to the mill and treated by an intricate and highly technical process before the sugar is worth £30 6s. 8d. a ton. The manufacture has to be scientifically controlled at every stage. I doubt if a modern sugar-mill, with all the necessary equipment of tramways and rolling-stock, could be erected for £500,000 at present prices.

Senator E. D. MILLEN.—What is a fair return per acre gross?

Senator CRAWFORD.—I could not say offhand. The average return is about 17 or 18 tons of cane to the acre, taking Queensland as a whole. With refined sugar at the present price of £30 6s. 8d. a ton, we might say that a ton of cane is worth 45s., but it might be a little more or less. Our costs have been changing so much from year to year, and there have been so many alterations in the price of sugar, that it is impossible to say offhand what the cost of production is.

Senator BOLTON.—According to your calculation, your return would be £40 an acre.

Senator CRAWFORD.—But consider what it costs to produce. This year it will cost over £1,000,000 to harvest the cane of Queensland. A good many sheep could be shorn for that money. Honorable senators will make a serious mistake, and do the sugar industry a great injustice, if they run away with the idea that it is very prosperous. In the sugar districts there will not be found anything

like the same average comfort amongst the growers as will be found amongst the fruit-growers in the irrigation settlements along the Murray. Nothing would convince honorable senators more of the true position of the sugar-growers of Queensland than a visit to some of our sugar districts. They would not find many evidences of general prosperity, nor would they see, as at Renmark and other fruit-growing settlements, practically every grower with his own motor car.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—The honorable senator's time has expired.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [10.5].—I have to announce definitely that the Government do not feel justified in supporting the proposed increase at the present time. There is an existing contract, which has two years to run, and which we are in honour bound to complete. The sugar-growers have nothing to complain about in the terms of that arrangement, whatever the consumers may say. I am satisfied that the Australian consumers could do better to-day without that contract. Senator Crawford made an unfortunate statement when he said we were looking after the consumers in that agreement and not after the sugar-growers. That is not so. In 1913 sugar could be imported for £10 10s. per ton. That was a mixture of raw and refined. Adding £2 for refining gives a cost of £12 10s. a ton. The lowest we paid to the growers under the pooling scheme was about £18 a ton. We therefore gave them a lift of about £5 10s. a ton in the first year we started the Pool. At that time sulphate of ammonia became scarce, and its price went up, so that it cost the sugar-growers, who use it extensively, particularly in the more northern parts of Queensland, at least £4 or £5 a ton extra, when they could get it. If they did not get it, their crops were light. As they had to meet that and other difficulties, we thought we were justified during the war period in granting them an increase in the price of sugar. At one time during the war we paid three times as much for the sugar we had to import, when Queensland failed to produce sufficient to meet the Australian demand, but averaging over the whole

period of the contract, I am sure we have paid for Queensland sugar more than the average price paid for sugar brought from overseas. Before the war the price of Australian sugar was generally fixed by the world's price outside, plus the £6 per ton duty. On that basis it has cost Australia over £26,000,000 to maintain the industry, which was a proper thing to do, as it helped to keep Australia white. On the pre-war price the protection of £6 per ton represents 57 per cent. Senator Crawford's proposal would make it a good deal more. If the duty on sugar were increased, we should have to review about 150 other items in the Tariff, affecting industries which use sugar as a raw material. When the Tariff Board begins operations it ought to be able to start an inquiry into the condition of the sugar industry, and then, when the contract runs out, if the industry is in a difficult position and wants help, I shall be prepared to consider sympathetically a request for an increase of duty. That, however, cannot be done during the period of the contract, under which the sugar-growers are well treated. I urge Senator Crawford not to press the request now, not because we are unsympathetic to the sugar industry, but because it would be two years before the increase could come into operation under the existing contract. Jam-makers and fruit preservers want to know where they are. We are allowing the makers of jam and condensed milk a rebate of duty on all the imported sugar which they re-export in their manufactures. Australia must have cheap sugar, because our jam-makers and fruit preservers have to compete in the world's markets. We are temporarily in a difficulty in that trade, mostly for the want of cheap sugar and cheap tin containers. The tin difficulty will be overcome, because the Broken Hill Company is going to make tin plate at Newcastle, and I am sure that sugar will come back to the world's normal price. We must keep Australia white, and therefore must protect the sugar industry to give the white growers an equal chance against the coloured races. I believe the Australian production of sugar has been a great success to date, but I cannot promise to increase the duty two years in advance of the time at which the increase could operate. I do not want to see a

sort of vacuum created when the contract expires, and it ought to be possible to arrange that an increased duty, if it is required, shall come into operation immediately on the expiry of the contract.

Senator PRATTEN.—The more the sugar-growers stir this business up, the more opposition they will get.

Senator RUSSELL.—One way in which to stir up the Australian community to-morrow would be to increase the duty on sugar. The people realize that they are making a sacrifice for the White Australia policy, and I have no doubt they would demand the cancellation of the contract if an attempt were made to force up the price of sugar. I ask Senator Crawford to withdraw the request, because the Government are sympathetic, as they have proved by assisting the industry in Queensland and so helping the Commonwealth as a whole. I am sure the sugar-growers will get generous support when the time comes to review the whole position.

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [10.14].—I hope nothing that I said will be construed into an attack on the Government, or a complaint against the Government, for their dealings with the sugar industry during and subsequent to the war period. The representatives of the industry always obtained a sympathetic hearing from whatever Minister they interviewed, and on the last occasion the Government, with the approval of both Houses, gave all that was asked for.

Senator WILSON.—I suppose that is why you ask for so much this time!

Senator CRAWFORD.—No; it is because I have an idea that the position two years from now will be an extremely difficult one for those engaged in the production of sugar, unless a higher measure of protection is given. The growers have to begin at once to prepare their land for the crop to be harvested in 1923. However, I suppose we must take whatever comfort we can get from the sympathetic assurances of the Minister as to what we may expect if, at a later stage, circumstances show that the fears I have expressed to-night have a valid foundation.

Request negatived.

Item agreed to.

Progress reported.

Senate adjourned at 10.20 p.m.

Senate.

Friday, 29 July, 1921.

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. T. Givens) took the chair at 11 a.m., and read prayers.

VALUE OF IMPORTATIONS.

Senator PRATTEN.—Has the Vice-President of the Executive Council replies to the questions that I have asked about the value of certain importations?

Senator RUSSELL.—The replies will take some time to prepare, and are not yet to hand; but I shall let the honorable senator have them as soon as they are ready.

CUSTOMS TARIFF BILL.

In Committee: Consideration resumed from 28th July, *vide* page 10650).

DIVISION III.—SUGAR.

Item 29 (Invert sugar) agreed to.

Item 30—

Sugar n.e.i., per cwt. 10s.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [11.2].—I direct the attention of Senator Crawford to this item, because the duty is in excess of the duty of £9 a ton for which he has asked. It is an old impost upon importations of beet sugar, and I hope that its continuance may have some effect in fostering the production of beet sugar in Australia. We have gone a little way towards supplying ourselves with beet sugar, and I hope that we shall go much further. I think that it will be all to the good if the very important cane sugar supplies of Queensland and New South Wales can be adequately supplemented with supplies of beet sugar.

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [11.4].—The duty under discussion was imposed by the first Customs Tariff Act, at a time when Germany and other European countries were paying high bounties for the export of beet sugar; it was, in effect, a countervailing duty. It has not, however, had any effect for a number of years upon the situation in Australia. A large production of beet sugar affects the price of sugar generally

in the markets of the world; but the import duty of £6 per ton is really the only protection given to the Australian sugar industry, to which it would not make any difference if the beet sugar duty were removed.

Senator PRATTEN.—Does the honorable senator say that he does not desire the continuance of the beet sugar duty, and that it is of no use?

Senator CRAWFORD.—I did not say that. There is a possibility of the dumping of beet sugar when the European beet industry has revived, just as there is the possibility of the dumping of German beer, which was referred to last night, and there may be a re-establishment of the European bounties.

Senator PRATTEN.—Does the honorable senator admit the possibility of increasing the production of beet sugar in Australia?

Senator CRAWFORD.—I think there is every possibility of increasing the production of beet sugar in Australia, and that all encouragement should be given to the industry, which has been established in a small way in Victoria. There is no reason why beet sugar should not be produced in practically every State of the Commonwealth. In the United States of America, whose labour conditions approximate those of Australia at the present time, about 1,000,000 tons of beet sugar are produced annually, and so far as I can see there is no reason, except the price of beet sugar, why a flourishing beet sugar industry should not exist in Australia. I should like to see such an industry here, because I do not know of anything which would have a more stabilizing influence on the Australian sugar industry generally than the production of considerable quantities of beet sugar in all the States. I do not think that the Government of Victoria is very sincere in its desire to establish the beet sugar industry on a firm basis, because last year it made a profit of £16,000 at the Maffra beet factory, and did not allow the beet-growers to share in it. While the present agreement affecting cane sugar remains in force, the beet sugar of Victoria is bringing over £7 per ton more than the producers of New South Wales and Queensland are receiving for cane sugar, because it does not go into the Pool, and the Victorian Government

gets for it the full market price of £49 per ton less discounts, while on the cane sugar, which all goes into the Pool, the Commonwealth Government makes a net profit of between £6 and £7 per ton, which helps to reduce the loss incurred by the importations of sugar.

Senator PRATTEN.—How much beet sugar is being manufactured now as compared with ten years ago?

Senator CRAWFORD.—I have not the exact figures, but I think that the estimate for 1920-21 was about 4,500,000 tons, and that the production in 1913-14 was about 8,000,000 tons. I do not think the annual beet sugar production of Australia has ever amounted to 2,000 tons. Last year it was about 1,200 tons.

Senator PRATTEN.—And ten years ago there was no production.

Senator CRAWFORD.—The Maffra beet factory was established more than ten years ago, but was closed for some years.

Senator BOLTON.—Does it manufacture for Victoria only?

Senator CRAWFORD.—Beet sugar is not manufactured in any of the other States.

Senator BOLTON.—This State has spent a lot of money in establishing the beet sugar industry.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Yes. They have made a considerable loss in doing so.

Senator GUTHRIE (Victoria) [11.10].

—There is no doubt that the sugar produced from cane grown in the northern parts of Australia is probably the best in the world, but the beet-sugar industry established in Victoria at considerable expense to the State Government has had a very rough spin, and is certainly one that ought to be fostered. Despite what some newspapers have said, we practically all stand for the production of Australian goods for consumption by Australian people, not only in regard to growing the raw product, but also in respect to turning it into the manufactured article. My attitude is that we should manufacture all the requirements of Australia by Australian labour for Australian people. I strongly support a duty which has been imposed for the purpose of fostering the beet-sugar industry in Australia.

Item agreed to.

Item 31 (Golden syrup and sugar syrups, n.e.i.) agreed to.

Item 32—

Molasses, free.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [11.12].—Before we pass this item I would like to know whether any molasses are imported?

Senator RUSSELL.—We imported £19,000 of molasses from Fiji last year.

Senator PRATTEN.—The fact that we are importing molasses while, as I am informed, molasses are going to waste in Queensland, owing to the expense of getting it to the markets where it could be used, raises a doubt as to whether we should agree to this item; but probably **Senator Crawford** could give the Committee some information on the point.

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [11.13].—For a number of years it has been the practice of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company to import considerable quantities of molasses from Fiji—the cash value of this molasses may not actually be great, but the quantity is considerable—and use them in their New South Wales distillery for the manufacture of methylated and other spirits. During the war a great many of our establishments were assisted to keep going by reason of the fact that the Bundaberg distillery and the Colonial Sugar Refining Company's distillery, at Sydney, were producing various forms of commercial spirits. However, I doubt whether the imposition of a duty would tend to the utilization of the molasses, which, unfortunately, are at present going to waste in Queensland because of the very low price at which the products derived from it have to be sold in Australia in competition with imports. Of course, the position was somewhat different during the war, and still is, but I can assure senators that the question of applying the whole of the molasses output of the Queensland mills to some use is not escaping the attention of those engaged in the sugar industry. While the imposition of a duty would not assist that industry at the present time it would probably have the effect of increasing the price of methylated spirit and the spirits used for chemical preparations.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [11.17].—I do not know whether **Senator**

Pratten has not the protectionist microbe to almost a self-destructive point. Molasses has been found to be very useful for stock-feeding purposes, yet in some parts of Western Australia it is almost unprocurable, even at a price which is over £20 per ton. Yet the honorable senator wants to put a duty on it.

Senator CRAWFORD.—There is no market for molasses for stock-feeding purposes except during a drought.

Senator LYNCH.—Even when there is no drought the graziers are asked to pay £2 10s. per 2-cwt. cask for it, and even when they are willing to pay this price they cannot get it. Yet this insane cry for a duty is raised. What advantage can be derived by placing a duty on a commodity which cannot be supplied, although those who require it are willing to pay cash for it?

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [11.18].—I am surprised at the inability of **Senator Lynch** to look all around this question. I am as fully aware as he is of the value and necessity of molasses for feeding stock in times of drought. My previous remarks upon this subject were directed to an inquiry from **Senator Crawford** as to the position in Queensland, and as a result of that inquiry we have been informed that considerable quantities of molasses go to waste in that State. But I now know that an effort is now being made to utilize what has hitherto been a waste material.

Senator CRAWFORD.—A considerable quantity of molasses is now being used in the Commonwealth Acetate of Lime Factory in Brisbane.

Senator PRATTEN.—Quite so. Another inquiry has elicited the fact that in the last financial year Australia imported £19,000 worth of molasses. Thus, while we are importing molasses from a black-labour country, we are also wasting molasses in Queensland. My only reason for speaking upon this item was because I thought it was a matter we might discuss fully, and with all due deference to **Senator Lynch** I believe that the little discussion we have had already has elicited some facts of which many honorable senators were not cognisant. I would favour a small duty on Fijian molasses if it would lead to preventing the waste

of molasses in Queensland. If the by-products of the industry can be sold at reasonable prices the result must be to lower the manufacturing cost of sugar, and its price to the consumer.

Senator LYNCH.—It has not been established that molasses is being wasted in Queensland.

Senator PRATTEN.—Senator Crawford has informed the Committee that it is not all being used, and that a considerable portion of it is being wasted.

Senator LYNCH.—And there are buyers of molasses in the market at £20 per ton.

Senator PRATTEN.—I do not know anything about that. I do know that when in New South Wales molasses has been required for the feeding of stock the price has been more like £3 per ton free on rail plus packages than £20 per ton.

Senator CRAWFORD.—The Queensland mills would be very glad to get £1 per ton for it.

Senator PRATTEN.—I am unable to say whether my honorable friend from the cinderella State has been misinformed, or whether there is something going on over there in connexion with the sale of molasses that is wrong.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—We are at the mercy of the rest of Australia in that regard as we are in connexion with most other matters.

Senator CRAWFORD.—The honorable senator should know that molasses is obtained from sugar beet as well as from sugar cane.

Senator PRATTEN.—Senator Crawford has said that steps are being taken to utilize molasses in Queensland, and as I initiated the discussion in order to obtain information, I am content to let the item go.

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [11.23].—The real difficulty in the utilization of molasses is the high cost of transport, combined with the high cost of containers, which have, of course, to be returned empty to the different sugar ports.

Senator PEARCE.—To obviate that difficulty we had to get a steamer specially fitted up with tanks.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Molasses is imported from Fiji in a tank steamer

specially built for the purpose. It is moored alongside the sugar mill wharfs, the molasses is poured into the tanks, and when the vessel arrives at Sydney it is pumped out again. The only way in which the molasses that is at present going to waste in Queensland can be profitably utilized is by establishing distilleries in the sugar districts, and that requires considerable capital. It was found impracticable to raise the necessary capital for that purpose during the war when there was a good market for methylated spirits and other products of molasses. I can assure honorable senators that it is not due to any lack of consideration of the matter by those engaged in the sugar industry that a profitable use has not so far been found for molasses.

Senator LYNCH.—What do they do with it in Queensland. Do they pump it into the rivers?

Senator CRAWFORD.—No, it is used chiefly as a fuel, of which very large quantities are required in the process of the manufacture of sugar.

Item agreed to.

DIVISION IV.—AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS AND GROCERIES.

Item 33—

Animal foods n.e.i. per cental, 2s.

Senator GUTHRIE.—I should like some information as to the foods which are covered by this item.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [11.26].—The item covers medicinal foods used for stock.

Senator GUTHRIE.—Which can be made here?

Senator RUSSELL.—Yes. It does not refer to chaff and oats and other foods of that description. The foods included in the item are by-products resulting from the treatment of grain, sometimes mixed with molasses. The importations are negligible, and have no effect upon the Australian production. No increase is contemplated in the duty. The item is not separately referred to in the export statistics. The exports for 1918-19 were valued at £13,000.

Item agreed to.

Item 34—

Animals, living (except for stud purposes), viz.:

- (A) Sheep, per head, British, 2s.; intermediate, 2s.; general, 2s.
- (B) Pigs, per head, British, 5s.; intermediate, 5s.; general, 5s.
- (C) Horned cattle, per head, British, 10s.; intermediate, 10s.; general, 10s.
- (D) Horses, per head, British, 10s.; intermediate, 10s.; general, 10s.

Senator GUTHRIE (Victoria) [11.28].

—I am against these duties, because they are of no use to the producers of Australia. We import sheep, pigs, and cattle, chiefly from New Zealand, and only in times of severe drought, when there is an insufficient supply of edible meat in Australia to meet the requirements of the people. The only effect of the duty in such cases is to increase the cost of meat to the consumer to the extent of the duty charged, and at a time when local prices are at a very inflated level. During the 1914 drought, when I sold my own Corriedale wethers, at as high as £5 per head, I also imported sheep from New Zealand. The price to which I have referred was an exorbitant price for the food of the people.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—Was the honorable senator profiteering?

Senator GUTHRIE.—No; I sold the wethers I have referred to by public auction at Newmarket. I was not responsible for the price they brought, and I would have accepted £2 per head had that been the last bid. In that year I imported several thousand head of fat sheep, which I obtained from New Zealand at from 35s. to £2 per head; and, after paying 7s. freight and 2s. duty, I made a small profit on them, but I brought meat into the Victorian market when it was very much needed. This duty is absolutely useless, and only tends to increase the price of meat to the people at times when it is already high. To-day the producers are not receiving payable prices. Beef up north is fetching 2½d. per lb., mutton 3d., and lamb 5d. to 5½d., whilst butchers are charging retail prices of 1s. to 1s. 3d. per lb. To-day beef is being sold at from 27s. 6d. to 35s. per 100 lbs., and mutton at 3d. per lb.; and yet, think of the exorbitant prices which the people are being charged by the retailers. Meat prices are one subject upon which I can agree with

the *Age*, which published an excellent article upon the meat trade yesterday. I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make sub-item (A), sheep, free.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [11.32].—A certain amount of revenue is derived from the importation of animals, but stock imported for stud purposes are admitted free; therefore, this item refers to only importations for commercial purposes. I do not know of any time when Australia, as a whole, has been subject to drought which has created a shortage of cattle and sheep.

Senator GUTHRIE.—In 1902-3 there was a general drought.

Senator RUSSELL.—But there was no time when the whole of Australia was simultaneously suffering from drought. For the protection of Australian flocks and herds, imported stock is subject to inspection and quarantine, in order to prevent the introduction of diseases from abroad. This work involves a certain amount of expense, which is not covered by the revenue derived from these duties.

Senator GUTHRIE.—Are there not quarantine charges?

Senator RUSSELL.—Yes. Valuable horses imported from England, and worth £2,000 or £3,000 each, are quarantined for a short period.

Senator GUTHRIE.—The sheep I imported from New Zealand were not quarantined. They were imported without any restrictions, although I had to pay a number of charges.

Senator RUSSELL.—If there had been any suspicion that the sheep were not clean, they would have been quarantined. I was referring to valuable stock imported from England—

Senator GUTHRIE.—But they are stud stock, and the Minister has already admitted that they come in free.

Senator RUSSELL.—Yes, but that leads to an improvement in our stock. The importations of sheep have been—
 1913, 8,448 head, valued at £28,508;
 1914-15, 6,140, valued at £23,600;
 1915-16, 6,597, valued at £36,511;
 1916-17, 3,809, valued at £12,470;
 1917-18, 1,719, valued at £9,850;
 1918-19, 607, valued at £4,776; and
 1919-20, 269, valued at £6,258.

Senator PRATTEN.—From what countries were they imported?

Senator RUSSELL.—Most of the cattle imported came from New Zealand. In 1919-20, two were imported from Great Britain, and were valued at £15, and 13 from New Zealand, valued at £2,860.

Senator GUTHRIE.—I do not think any beef has ever been imported, but mutton has been. The other stock is for stud purposes, and is imported from Great Britain, New Zealand, and occasionally America.

Senator RUSSELL.—I think Australia can grow all its own mutton.

Senator GUTHRIE.—Not in drought years. In 1902-3, mutton was so scarce that the people were eating skeletons.

Senator RUSSELL.—Only in time of drought does the consumer get cheap meat. In 1913, because of drought conditions, there was a record export of mutton from Victoria.

Senator GUTHRIE.—There was no drought in 1913, but there was in 1914-15.

Senator RUSSELL.—Whenever a dry season threatens, the market quickens, and the consumer gets a chance. Where there is a possibility of drought, stock is rushed to the market. Where there is a good season, the stock are kept in the country.

Senator GUTHRIE.—The Minister has overlooked the period between the threatened drought and the good season. It is during the actual drought, when there is no meat worth eating, that some has to be imported.

Senator RUSSELL.—It is not worth while keeping sheep on drought-stricken country, and that is avoided by exporting a large proportion of the sheep.

Senator GUTHRIE.—Do not forget that we lost 15,000,000 sheep in the last drought.

Senator RUSSELL.—In 1913-14 the number of sheep imported from the United Kingdom was twenty-seven, and their value was £130. The following year thirty-three were imported, valued at £143. From New Zealand there were imported that year thirty-three sheep, valued at £109, and later on the number imported in the various years was 18, 21, 16 and 19. They were probably all stud stock. We do not desire to unnecessarily throw open our market.

Senator GUTHRIE.—I do not think that the honorable gentleman understands the position at all. I am a grower of sheep, and while the Tariff will protect me it will increase the price of meat to the people of Australia at a time when its price will be already too high.

Senator RUSSELL.—That may be so. But, speaking generally, it is possible at all times to get plenty of meat from some part or other of Australia.

Senator GUTHRIE.—That is just where the honorable senator is entirely wrong. In 1913, and again in 1915, during the prevalence of drought, the people could not get meat. They were eating skin and bone.

Senator RUSSELL.—After all the duty is purely a revenue duty.

Senator DUNCAN.—Upon the Minister's own showing there is not much revenue derived from it.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [11.43].—In the discussion of the various items contained in the schedule to this Bill the Committee should be guided at all events partially by pronouncements from specialists. We all know that Senator Crawford is a specialist in connexion with the sugar industry and its subsidiary industries. We know, too, that upon matters relating to stock and wool Senator Guthrie is a specialist by virtue, not merely of the position which he holds, but of his life-long experience. Consequently, I think that the Committee should pay some attention to his statements in regard to these duties. He has stated that the proposed duties will be of no assistance to the primary producer, whilst their abolition may possibly be of value to the consumer. He has pointed out that if they remain in force they will be prejudicial to the interests of the consumer in time of drought.

Senator BENNY.—Are not those statements rather inconsistent? I do not see how they can be reconciled.

Senator PRATTEN.—I shall endeavour to convey to the honorable senator the impression which I gained from Senator Guthrie's speech. The honorable senator informed us that these duties will be of no assistance whatever to our primary producers—that they are merely so much camouflage. The Vice-President of the Executive Council (Senator Russell) has

shown that, in good years, there are practically no importations of sheep into Australia, with the exception of stud stock, which are admitted free. It has been further demonstrated that there have been considerable importations for food in periods when meat was scarce and dear. Clearly these importations were made for the meat-eaters of this country, and they certainly tended to relieve the local market.

Senator RUSSELL.—In what year was that?

Senator GUTHRIE.—I imported some thousands from New Zealand in 1913-14.

Senator RUSSELL.—There were only about 6,000 imported during that year.

Senator PRATTEN.—Senator Guthrie has referred to two periods, namely, 1902 and 1914-15, when disastrous droughts were experienced in Australia, and when meat was dear, and almost unobtainable. It is inevitable that similar periods will be experienced again. Let us suppose that at such a time New Zealand is, figuratively speaking, overflowing with milk and honey. Let us assume that the grass there is green, that water is plentiful, and that the lambs are fat. In such circumstances is it not reasonable to suppose that these duties will be passed on to the consumer? I am merely putting the position as I view it. I am not an expert upon this matter, and I do not possess the technical knowledge which is possessed by Senator Guthrie, but I am inclined to accept his statements as a true reflex of the views that are generally held by our primary producers.

Senator PAYNE (Tasmania) [11.49].—I am afraid that Senator Guthrie is making rather too much of this matter. Of course, I can understand an honorable senator who sees a possibility of helping the consumer taking up a very strong stand upon any item. My own impression is that if the duty upon sheep be abolished the consumer will not be assisted one iota. Striking an average, that duty does not represent more than a farthing per lb. According to Senator Guthrie's own statement, although stock in Australia to-day are being sold at very low prices, the consumer is still being obliged to pay very high prices for his meat. That statement knocks the honorable senator's argument to pieces.

Here to-day the fat-stock market prices are low, yet one has to pay the butcher a high price for a piece of meat.

Senator GUTHRIE.—Because we have been exploited.

Senator PAYNE.—And we shall be exploited in the same way even if we remove this duty.

Senator GUTHRIE.—This is not a big question, but to a man who is familiar with the position this duty appears to be a stupid one. It is of no use to the producer, and, if anything, is inimical to the interests of the consumer. In the year to which I have already referred many thousands of fat sheep would have been brought from New Zealand but for the duty of 2s.

Senator PAYNE.—The duty on sheep must produce some revenue.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—It produces very little. In 1914 it yielded only £217, and no revenue has been obtained from it since then.

Senator PAYNE.—I am taking up this attitude, not merely in the interests of the producers, but because I think it folly to allow sheep to come in free when we know that by removing the duty we shall not benefit the consumer. The Government require every pound they can get by way of revenue. In respect of many Tariff items huge sacrifices of revenue are being made, and, even if this item yields only £200 a year, I think it should be retained. I am prepared to help the consumer wherever possible, but the removal of this duty would grant him no relief.

Senator GUTHRIE (Victoria) [11.53].

—I would not take up the time of the Committee in discussing this question but that it relates to what is more or less my profession, and I am, therefore, thoroughly familiar with the position. In urging the removal of the duty I am opposing my own personal interests. I am a stock-fattener, and can fatten sheep during even the biggest drought period, because I have partially irrigated lucerne. But why should I be able to charge people who are already paying too much for meat an extra 2s. per sheep because of the existence of this stupid duty, which is designed, perhaps, to prevent sheep being brought in from New Zealand, a country where drought is unknown and where there is

every year a huge surplus of fat stock? In the year to which I have referred, but for this duty many thousands more sheep would have been brought from Dunedin to Melbourne, and the price of prime mutton to the people would thus have been reduced at least a little. I maintain, as a fattener of stock, that the duty is of no value; and I trust the Minister will agree to request the House of Representatives to remove it.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [11.55].—Theoretically, Protectionists do not favour revenue duties, since they are inconsistent with the policy of Protection, but we must not forget that our enormous war expenditure renders it urgently necessary that we should obtain as much revenue as possible. A duty amounting to, perhaps, 2s. 6d. per lb. has been imposed on tobacco, so that, to be consistent, honorable senators who support the removal of this duty on the ground that they desire to benefit the consumer should have asked for the removal of the duty on tobacco. I claim to be a strong Protectionist, and there are in the Tariff at least 100 items which, as a Protectionist, I could not in ordinary circumstances support; but, recognising that revenue must be raised either in this or some other way, I feel bound to accept them. There are in the Tariff many items similar to that now under consideration the duties on which yield very little revenue, but the aggregate return from them is considerable, so that if the whole of those duties were removed we should have to increase taxation in some other direction. I do not claim to be a sheep expert, but I have heard that the majority of the sheep in New Zealand are of the Corriedale type.

Senator GUTHRIE.—I wish they were. There are not more than 3 per cent. About 2 per cent. are merinoes, and the rest are all British breeds.

Senator RUSSELL.—I understand that sheep that are brought here from New Zealand for breeding purposes do not do very well, but revert quickly to type.

Senator GUTHRIE.—That is not so.

Senator RUSSELL.—This is not a national question, but I hope we shall not have the same demand made in respect of other items the revenue from which

is relatively small. If every duty that yields only a small amount of revenue were removed the total loss to the Treasury would be very considerable, and we should have to make good that loss by taxation in other directions. All the animals imported into Australia have to undergo a period of quarantine, and that involves the Government in considerable expenditure.

Senator GUTHRIE.—No quarantine is imposed in respect of sheep from New Zealand.

Senator RUSSELL.—Very well. I hope that whatever may be the decision of honorable senators in this case they will not request that every duty on commodities that are not made in Australia shall be removed. I have often voted to put such commodities on the free list, but owing to the urgent need of revenue I must now vote for the imposition of duties on them.

Senator REID (Queensland) [11.58].—When Senator Guthrie rose to draw attention to this question I was about to ask the Minister (Senator Russell) why a duty on sheep had been imposed. I come from a State where there are millions of sheep and cattle, and I am convinced that this item will not be of any benefit to the industry. Senator Guthrie, who speaks as one who knows, has clearly shown that a duty of this kind is not calculated to encourage breeding or to improve our stock. The imposition of such a duty, suggesting as it does that we are trying to keep stock out of the country, is a rather bad advertisement for Australia. I shall support the placing of this sub-item on the free list. As to the supply of fat stock on the market, we must not lose sight of the fact that with better railway facilities there would have been no shortage during previous droughts. There are parts of Queensland where enormous quantities of fat stock are produced, and if during the last drought there had been reasonable railway facilities stock could have been brought from those districts to the southern markets. As it was, they could not be travelled because of the long stages without water. Since then our railway facilities have been improved, and I do not think we shall suffer in future as much as we have done. In the interest

of the consumer this duty should be removed. I do not know to what extent he will benefit, because, after all, those who import fat sheep will get the price prevailing for mutton in Australia.

Senator SENIOR.—But that price would be plus this duty.

Senator REID.—That is so. The Minister (Senator Russell) has emphasized the fact that the revenue raised from the duty imposed in connexion with the importation of stock has helped to pay quarantine expenses. According to Senator Guthrie, it was only during the 1914-15 drought that sheep were imported from New Zealand, and the Customs revenue raised from that source was practically negligible. Apparently, it will be only during drought periods that the Government will derive revenue under this item; and, seeing that the effect of the duty will obviously be to add a little to the price of meat during periods of scarcity, I think the imposition might well be wiped out.

Senator ELLIOTT (Victoria) [12.2].—I shall stand by the item as it appears in the schedule. From what Senator Guthrie has said, sheep are only occasionally imported from New Zealand; and the effect of the duty imposed, when the stock is put up for auction, is so slight as not to influence the price.

Senator GUTHRIE.—If the duty had not been imposed, I can only say that I and other importers would have secured thousands more sheep from New Zealand, and would have given the people more and better-quality meat at a more reasonable price than they were paying at the time.

Senator ELLIOTT.—A New Zealand sheep averages about 60 lbs. The addition of 2s. per head by way of duty would make very little difference to the retail price per pound, and surely would have no influence upon the activities of importers.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [12.4].—Bearing in mind the extent of the sheep-raising industry in Australia, this small amount of duty is an absurdity. Why this sudden spasm on the part of the Government to raise a few shillings on the total head of stock imported to Australia?

Senator RUSSELL.—This is not a sudden spasm; the duty has existed for years.

Senator GUTHRIE.—And it is the laughing-stock of Australia.

Senator LYNCH.—Upon reference to the 1908 Tariff I find that the duty was first imposed under the schedule of that year. I admit that it is ridiculous for me to quote from the particulars which were then made available to members of Parliament; but, since nothing of the kind has been provided to-day, I may mention that the importations in 1906 were 161 head of horned cattle, 11,000 sheep, 24 pigs, and 426 horses. Those totals are, of course, too trivial to be worth considering as a means of raising revenue by way of duty. Applied to the number of sheep imported during the year in question, the duty would be, roughly, equivalent to 10 per cent., and upon the total number of horses imported, equal to about 3 per cent. Will any one say that those rates are likely to protect and encourage the raising of sheep and horses in Australia? Do sheep-farmers and horse-breeders want any such encouragement? Do they need any Customs protection whatever? This item is only so much surplusage, and should be wiped off the schedule. It affords protection where none is sought, and imposes a penalty in times when all such impositions mean additional hardship. I take the opportunity to re-state my intention to refrain from supporting any substantial item in the schedule except those having to do with the importation of luxuries. I appeal to honorable senators to assist in framing a schedule which will stand as a credit to the Federal Parliament. When the opportunity arises to impose essentially Protective duties I shall, where they are wanted, give my hearty assistance in that direction. But the cattle and sheep raisers of Australia can hold their own, without assistance, against all competition. They do not ask to be sheltered behind a Tariff schedule so that they may grow fat and lazy. When people appeal for high rates of duty, my attitude is that they are not entitled to excessive protection. Let them have such a fair measure of encouragement as will insure success for their industry, at the same time, however, forcing them, for their own good, to keep their noses down to the grindstone, just as other folk have to do

who neither want nor seek coddling assistance.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [12.10].—Senator Lynch assumes that the Government are imposing this duty on the protective principle, but the first words that fell from my lips were that the principal object of this and a number of other similar duties was to raise revenue. I do not say that the loss of revenue involved in this item will ruin the Commonwealth, but I emphasize the fact that if, throughout this schedule, we adopted the principle—which I believe in, and would gladly vote to carry out if it could be applied—that no article which cannot be manufactured in Australia ought to be dutiable, we should be up against a number of unforeseen consequences. I admit that, under true Protection, such articles should be as free as air, and that the protection on the natural key industries of Australia should be high. That is the theory, but the Committee must remember that this is not purely a protective schedule. We have to keep our eye on the revenue, and if the Committee picked out a number of little items which bear duties running from 2 to 5 per cent., and of which the object is to raise revenue, and delete them, they would reduce the Treasurer's Budget by £2,000,000 or £3,000,000. Then we should be up against the necessity of taxing the community to make up the deficit—the most unpopular thing that we could possibly do.

Senator RED.—How much revenue have we received from this source during the last ten years?

Senator RUSSELL.—Not much; but we have distributed small duties over a number of articles which, in normal times, would not be taxed. The Committee must keep in mind the fact that the Government must raise, by one means or another, a certain amount of revenue. It is not worth the while of the Committee to bother about cutting down duties that have existed for twenty or thirty years. I leave the matter to the judgment of the Committee, but I hope the principle of reduction or abolition will not be generally applied, because it will seriously reduce the revenue.

Senator DUNCAN.—I do not think the Minister can show us half-a-dozen similar items in the whole schedule.

Senator RUSSELL.—There are numbers of them.

Senator GUTHRIE.—I guarantee that the Minister could not show us another such stupid one.

Senator RUSSELL.—Perhaps the honorable senator has picked out the most stupid. Honorable senators surely would not claim that tobacco was a great luxury, yet we have put on it a heavy duty, which must be borne by the working men of Australia. We do not produce tobacco leaf in Australia in sufficient quantities for good smoking, so that Senator Guthrie's principle is not applied to that item. To be consistent, the honorable senator should advocate the reduction of the charges on tobacco by about 5s. per lb. Where should we end if we started on that principle? I quite see the force of the theoretical principle, but we cannot afford to adopt it. I urge the Committee not to cut the revenue too low, because we require a considerable amount to carry on the government of the Commonwealth.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [12.14].—The Minister appeals to the Committee not to cut down too many revenue duties, because otherwise the revenue from the Tariff will fall considerably short of the Commonwealth's requirements. The only action taken so far by the Committee is in the direction of raising duties. We have asked another place to do so in four specific directions, in one very considerably. The effect of raising the duties on foreign lager beer, if the importations keep up to the average of the years before the embargo was imposed, will be to produce an extra revenue from that one source alone of from £50,000 to £100,000 in the year.

Senator RUSSELL.—If the increased duty on lager is effective it will be prohibitive, and there will be no imports.

The CHAIRMAN.—I must ask honorable senators not to make more than a passing allusion to items which have already been dealt with.

Senator PRATTEN.—I am endeavouring to deal only with the financial effect of the request before the Committee. Let

us assume, to be on the safe side, that the effect of the increase which the Committee has already requested another place to make, will be to swell the revenue approximately by £50,000, entirely from foreign beers. The duty on animals, which we want to abolish, and which the Minister appeals to us to retain for revenue purposes, will not amount, in any one year, on his own showing, on the average importations which have taken place, to more than about £1,000.

Senator RUSSELL.—The amount is not important to me at all, but I am worrying about the general application of the principle of admitting free all articles that we do not produce in Australia.

Senator PRATTEN.—I admit it. I was merely replying to the Minister's appeal to the Committee to retain the duty for revenue purposes. It is clear that, already, the receipts from the Tariff, if our requests are accepted, will be considerably more than the Government anticipated. We have, therefore, an ample margin for a reduction on some of what Senator Guthrie has described as stupid duties.

Question.—That the request (Senator GUTHRIE's) be agreed to—put.

The Committee divided.

Ayes	12
Noes	9
Majority	3

AYES.

Benny, B.	Reid, M.
Buzacott, R.	Senior, W.
Drake-Brockman, E. A.	Vardon, E. C.
Glasgow, Sir Thomas	Wilson, R. V.
Guthrie, J. F.	
Lynch, P. J.	<i>Teller:</i>
Pratten, H. E.	Duncan, W. L.

NOES.

Bakhap, T. J. K.	Payne, H. J. M.
Bolton, W. K.	Pearce, G. F.
Earle, J.	Russell, E. J.
Elliott, H. E.	<i>Teller:</i>
Henderson, G.	de Largie, H.

PAIR.

Gardiner, A.	Millen, E. D.
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Question so resolved in the affirmative.
Request agreed to.

Senator GUTHRIE.—I desire to move that a similar request be made in reference to pigs, horned cattle, and horses.

Senator RUSSELL.—We shall accept the verdict of the vote taken, which we hold to apply to the lot.

Request (by Senator GUTHRIE) agreed to—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make sub-items (B), (C), and (D) free.

Item agreed to subject to requests.

Item 35 (Annatto).

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [12.24].—Annatto is vegetable dye, used chiefly for the purpose of colouring cheese and butter, and is the product of a plant cultivated in the West Indies.

Item agreed to.

Item 36 (Arrowroot).

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [12.25].—Will the Minister give us some idea of the importations of arrowroot in recent years from overseas?

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [12.26].—The importations of arrowroot were—10,860 lbs. in 1913, 19,680 lbs. in 1914-15, 136,493 lbs. in 1915-16, 97,563 lbs. in 1916-17, 99,425 lbs. in 1917-18, 1,689 lbs. in 1918-19, and 4,352 lbs. in 1919-20. The value of these importations was—£230 in 1913, £266 in 1914-15, £1,722 in 1915-16, £1,363 in 1916-17, £1,529 in 1917-18, £88 in 1918-19, and £259 in 1919-20. Arrowroot is grown in Australia, chiefly in Queensland, and the figures refer to the root as taken out of the ground, not the prepared root ready for use. The Australian production was—10,823,680 lbs. in 1913-14, 7,257,600 lbs. in 1914-15, 4,856,320 lbs. in 1915-16, 8,180,480 lbs. in 1916-17, 9,101,120 lbs. in 1917-18, and in 1918-19, the last year for which I have figures, it was 12,429,760 lbs.

Senator PRATTEN.—Do the figures represent the production of Queensland?

Senator RUSSELL.—They represent the production in Australia, but mostly in Queensland, and they show a very fine development over that period of years.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [12.27].—The figures must be extremely satisfactory to the arrowroot-growers of Queensland, and are conclusive evidence that the proposed duty should stand.

Item agreed to.

Item 37 (Bacon and ham).

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [12.28].—We now come to one of the duties, of which there are many, that I think can be described as quiescent; that

is to say, the development of the industry has been such that, practically, duties do not apply. The bacon and ham industry in Australia in recent years has attained such dimensions that I believe the home market is already supplied, and there is considerable export trade, largely, again, from Queensland. I regard such duties as these as purely nominal, having no effect on the cost of the commodity, and no protective effect.

Senator BOLTON.—Then why not remove this duty? We have decided to let in pigs free—why not bacon?

Senator PRATTEN.—I am not prepared to support the reduction of duties which, in essence, afford some cover for the primary producer.

Senator RUSSELL.—Large quantities of bacon used to be imported from Germany.

Senator PRATTEN.—That was so before the duties were raised. This and similar duties particularly affect the primary producer, and help him as well as other people.

Senator BOLTON.—Germany will send pigs instead of bacon!

Item agreed to.

Item 38 (Biscuits).

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [12.29].—This is another of those duties which I have described as quiescent. This duty does not affect the price of biscuits in Australia; and as a result of the imposition of duties in the past the industry is now one of which we may well be proud. There will always be some who will prefer imported biscuits, but they are consumed only by those who think that those manufactured in Australia are not good enough. Generally speaking, the biscuit industry has been established in Australia by virtue of the duties imposed in previous years.

Item agreed to.

Item 39 (Blue, laundry).

Senator BOLTON.—Will the Minister (Senator Russell) supply the Committee with some information concerning the importations of laundry blue?

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria,—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [12.32].—The values of the importations were—1913, £3,363; 1914-15, £2,624; 1915-16, £2,168; 1916-17, £2,090; 1917-18, £1,274; 1918-19, £2,742; 1919-20, £2,387. Laundry blue is composed of ultramarine blue, bi-carbonate of soda,

and dextrine. The usual proportions are 55 per cent. of ultramarine blue, 45 per cent. of bi-carbonate of soda, and the proportion of dextrine, which merely serves as a binding agent, is immaterial. The Federal Analyst, Mr. Wilkinson, states that in samples of imported blue examined the colouring matter consists of aniline dye. No application has been received for increased duties on laundry blue, and it is evident that the rates on the materials will tend to increase the cost of manufacture in Australia. The chief manufacturers in the Commonwealth are Lewis and Whitty, and A. C. Parkin and Company, of Melbourne, and Reckitts Limited, of Sydney. Lewis and Whitty are making ultramarine blue, and expect that eventually they will be able to manufacture all their requirements. At present they make about 25 per cent. of what they need, and import the balance. The firm is in favour of the new duty on ultramarine blue, although at present it will be a handicap. Their supplies of bi-carbonate of soda are imported. These firms are producing all our requirements, and are also producing more of the raw material necessary for the manufacture of laundry blue.

Senator SENIOR (South Australia) [12.35].—I am glad the Minister has given that information. When the chlorine is removed from salt sodium remains, and from sodium we obtain soda ash, carbonate of soda, caustic soda, and bi-carbonate of soda. The major portion of these commodities can be produced in Australia, including ultramarine blue. A short time ago I visited Longwood, in South Australia, where china clay or kaolin is found, and from which I saw a very good sample—one of the best I have ever handled—of ultramarine blue produced. This product was manufactured without the assistance of any extensive plant; but it was of a very satisfactory quality, and proved conclusively what can be done in Australia. We should by all means at our disposal encourage the production of raw materials required in local manufactures, and as these products are used in connexion with the manufacture of laundry blue the industry should receive every encouragement. For these reasons I support the proposed duties.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [12.38].—Although the article under discussion is not of great importance, it clearly illustrates the necessity of having further information on some of the more important items with which we shall have to deal before the Tariff is disposed of. I therefore ask the Minister (Senator Russell) if it is not possible to arrange for the old duties, and the importations in quantities and values to be set out in tabular form so that honorable senators may be able to record an intelligent vote. I understand the type is still standing, and it will be an easy and inexpensive matter to insert an additional column or two giving the information I desire. When I returned from Western Australia there was sufficient correspondence on these subjects in my letter-box to fill a horse stall, and I appeal to the Minister, if we are to do justice to this task, to supply further particulars. I realize that he is doing his utmost to give us all the information at his disposal; but we cannot do justice to our work if we are compelled to give summary decisions after endeavouring to digest facts and figures which are being heaved at us, quite respectfully, I admit. Before some of the more important items are reached we should be supplied with the duties imposed in 1908, and information concerning the effect of such impositions. Above all, we should be enabled to find out the range of duty. No one knows in this instance what a duty of 2d. per lb. means per cent.

Senator RUSSELL.—The honorable senator mentioned this matter yesterday, and I told him that a book had been sent to him which contained the information that he desired.

Senator LYNCH.—I am not in possession of the information which I regard as necessary.

Senator RUSSELL.—There is a book which gives the information that the honorable senator wants, and I shall procure it for him.

Senator LYNCH.—It is unfair to ask us suddenly to arrive at a determination on these proposals without proper information.

Item agreed to.

Item 40 (Broom-corn millet and rice straw).

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [12.43].—The duty on broom millet and rice straw first proposed was 4s. per cental on importations from Great Britain; but, on the motion of the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) in another place, it was increased to 8s. per cental because of certain representations by the local growers. This doubling of the duty was agreed to because it was considered that all the broom millet that Australia needs can be produced within the Commonwealth, and the Minister's amendment was supported by the representatives of the primary producers. I shall support the increased duty.

Item agreed to.

Item 41 (Butter and cheese, &c.) agreed to.

Item 42—

Candles, tapers, and night-lights:—

- (A) Wax. per lb. British, 1½d.; intermediate, 2d.; general, 2½d.
- (B) N.E.I., per lb., British, 1½d.; intermediate, 2d.; general, 2d.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [12.45].—These duties should be carefully considered by the Committee from several angles. We have first to consider how they affect those whom I may call the growers of tallow, from which is manufactured stearine, which is the material of which most candles are made. By the retention of the duties now proposed a very grave injustice will be done to the Australian manufacturers of wax candles. I wish also to direct attention to the fact that, if the item is passed as it stands, there is grave danger, not only that the local manufacture of wax candles may be destroyed, but that the local manufacture of stearine candles may be seriously prejudiced by the importation of wax candles, chiefly from Rangoon, in Burmah, where they are made in very large quantities with black labour from a by-product of crude oil under monopolistic control. During the past decade, the soap and candle-making industry has largely developed in Australia, and at the present time almost all the soap and candles used in the Commonwealth are of local manufacture and made almost entirely of local products. Therefore, to open a door to cheap Asiatic candles would be a serious matter. I can safely

say that the plants which have been erected in Australia for the manufacture of stearine from tallow have cost hundreds of thousands of pounds, and, of course, it is obvious that it is advantageous to our primary producers to have this demand for their tallow. But although a very large quantity of candles is made from stearine, there is also a local manufacture of wax candles made from imported wax. I understand that there is some demand for wax candles in preference to stearine candles.

Senator PAYNE.—A big demand.

Senator PRATTEN.—I wish to state my case moderately. Whatever we may do in fixing the duties on candles, we shall not be able to abolish the use of wax candles. But what is the position in which the decision of the House of Representatives has placed the local manufacture of wax candles? What is the position forced upon the manufacturers of wax candles in Australia through the insufficient consideration of this item? In 1911 the Tariff imposed a duty of 1d. per lb. on imported wax, and 2d. per lb. on imported wax candles made by black labour, and the same rates were adhered to in the 1914 Tariff, but for some reason or other, possibly through an oversight, the Tariff introduced in 1920 placed a duty of 1½d. per lb. on wax, and only 2d. per lb. on wax candles made by black labour, thereby reducing the Protection afforded to the wax candle maker of Australia by 50 per cent. Then another place, in order to protect the Australian manufacturers of candles who make their candles from stearine, increased the duty on imported wax to 2d. per lb., and perpetrated again the injustice contained in the Tariff as introduced by adhering to the small margin of ½d. per lb. between the duty on imported wax and the higher rate on imported wax candles made by black labour. If we do not increase the duty on wax candles made by black labour we shall have a lot of these candles dumped into Australia to the injury of everybody. I have in my hand a copy of an order given for Burmah wax candles, duty paid, delivery in Sydney, at 7½d. per lb. The duty included in the price is the existing rate of 2½d. per lb. The present price of stearine candles in Australia is 9d. per lb., and they cannot be produced under 8d. per lb. I ask the

Committee to give careful consideration to this glaring anomaly, and I hope that as the debate progresses it will be rectified.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [12.56].—The Customs returns show that no candles have been imported from Burmah for the past ten years. The Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) made a complete investigation into the position of wax. No wax candles are manufactured outside Australia except by black labour. The manufacture of stearine candles is a natural Australian industry, and I believe that in point of quality and suitability the Australian candle is equal to any imported article. But we have to bear in mind that the process of extracting stearine from tallow also provides a quantity of glycerine, which is so essential in munition making. Early in the recent war, when the British Government were seeking for glycerine from all parts of the world, Australia sent them all the copra produced in our islands. Copra contains a large percentage of glycerine. We also, at the request of the Imperial Government, placed an embargo on the importation of soaps and candles, the idea being to have these articles manufactured in Australia, so that we could secure the by-product, glycerine, and send it to the Old Country. We have now an opportunity of extending this business, and at the same time turning out a glycerine of excellent quality, which will be essential in our defence preparations when we undertake the manufacture of munitions. The overwhelming superiority of the claim that we should make use of our own raw materials in this way is perfectly obvious, and I hope nothing will be done to assist in the importation of wax produced by cheap black labour at the expense of a commodity which is wholly produced in Australia under Australian labour conditions.

Sitting suspended from 1 to 2.30 p.m.

Senator PAYNE (Tasmania) [2.30].—This item is worthy of discussion, inasmuch as on the decision of Parliament will depend to a very great extent the future success of an industry which has been in operation in Australia for a good many years and has made fair strides. Unless we do what is right in fixing the

duties on candles, it is probable that this industry, in which a considerable amount of capital is invested, will be lost to Australia, and those concerned in it will lose the money they have invested.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I understand that something like £11,000,000 is involved.

Senator PAYNE.—I do not know the exact amount of the capital invested in the industry. Senator Pratten put the position very clearly, but he took no definite action. I can understand that the reason is that the duty to be imposed on paraffine wax must be taken into consideration when deciding an adequate duty on candles. Those who are engaged in the manufacture of wax candles in Australia rightly contend that their industry has been almost entirely dependent on their being able to secure paraffine wax, which can only be obtained in large quantities from Rangoon. The Vice-President of the Executive Council (Senator Russell) made a statement to the effect that we are not justified in taking action for the protection of an industry if the basis of it is a raw material produced by black labour. It has to be borne in mind that the candle-manufacturing industry was first established in Australia when the raw material it required was obtainable only from countries in which black labour is employed. In those countries very little attention has been given in the past to the manufacture of candles. Recently noting the opportunities offering in Australia, people in those countries have had their attention directed to the matter, and it has occurred to them that a very large trade might be done with Australia in candles. I have no doubt that the information given by Senator Pratten on this matter is absolutely correct. It goes to show that within the last fortnight a contract has been entered into for the purchase of a very large supply of candles, with the option of quadrupling the first order, to be landed in Australia at a price which would absolutely prevent the Australian product being marketed at a rate which would give a reasonable return for the cost of labour involved in its manufacture.

Senator PRATTEN.—The price quoted is 7½d. per lb. delivered duty paid in Australia.

Senator PAYNE.—Yes. The information I have is in these terms:—

Only this week we have been offered from Rangoon 16-oz. wax candles, 125 melting point, duty paid, delivered at our store for 7½d. net. We have taken advantage of this offer, and have ordered, which has been accepted, 1,000 cases of these candles at the above price, with the option of buying another 10,000 cases at the same figure.

One cannot discuss this question properly without discussing at the same time the cost of the raw material to the industry here. In the circumstances, I suggest the postponement of this item until after we have dealt with the duty on wax. That is a business-like proposition to make. After we have considered on its merits a request for a reduction in the duty on the raw material of this industry we shall be in a position, should that request be agreed to, to decide what would be a reasonable duty to impose on the manufactured article. I hope that the Minister will consent to a postponement of this item.

Senator RUSSELL.—I shall have no objection to do so. I should like to make further inquiries into the matter myself.

Senator PAYNE.—If the course which I suggest is not adopted, we might increase the duties on candles, and later on might deal with the duty on wax in such a way as to make the action taken in respect of candles absolutely absurd. The two items require to be considered together. We can discuss the whole industry when dealing with the raw material, and the decision then arrived at should govern to a great extent the course to be followed by the Committee when dealing with the duties on candles. I do not know that anything is to be gained by a lengthy discussion on the candle industry on this item in view of the reasons I have advanced for its postponement.

Senator GUTHRIE (Victoria) [2.39].—Believing, as I do, in Australian goods for Australian people, and knowing that the candle-manufacturing industry employs about 1,000 of our people under good conditions, and makes use of some raw products of Australia, such as tallow, it was my intention at this stage to move for an increase in the duties on candles. But I think it would be far better if Senator Russell would agree to defer the consideration of this item until after we

have dealt with the duties to be imposed on wax.

Senator DUNCAN (New South Wales) [2.42].—The Minister (Senator Russell) has taken some exception to a statement made by me that Rangoon candles had been offered at 7½d. per lb., delivered in Sydney, duty paid. In proof of my statement I submit the following letter:—

Sydney, 19th July, 1921.

RANGOON CANDLES.

Dear Sir.—Referring to our conversation re Rangoon candles, we shall be glad to cable for your requirements for shipment to be specified by you, at 7½d. per lb., duty paid and delivered net, based on present rate of duty of 2½d. per lb., net cash against documents on presentation.

We shall be glad to have your instructions.

Yours faithfully,

GOLLIN AND COMPANY PROPRIETARY LIMITED.

Senator RUSSELL.—I did not challenge the honorable senator's statement, but no importations of Rangoon candles have been recorded by the Customs Department for more than ten years. The letter which the honorable senator has read apparently indicates a new move, and that is why I favour the postponement of the item to allow of further inquiry being made.

Item postponed.

Item 43—

Coffee and chicory—

- (A) raw and kiln dried, per lb., 3d.;
- (B) roasted or ground, per lb., 6d.;
- (C) substitutes, per lb., 6d.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [2.44].—Some years ago I had the pleasure of drinking coffee grown in Queensland, and I should like some information as to how the duties hitherto imposed have operated in the encouragement of coffee cultivation in Australia?

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [2.45].—The value of the importations of raw coffee in the last seven years have been:—1913, £97,756; 1914-15, £78,755; 1915-16, £84,348; 1916-17, £96,846; 1917-18, £67,304; 1918-19, £95,380. No increases in respect of this item are proposed, the Inter-State Commission having reported—

The present duties (i.e. 1908-11 Tariff) are sufficient for this industry, which is capable of considerable development, and its failure is not due to the Tariff, but to the avoidable causes to which attention has been invited. The only efficient means of promoting coffee cultivation in Australia is, in the opinion of the Commission, by setting apart large areas

in suitable localities and concentrating the industry so that growers may obtain the substantial benefits of co-operation. It is considered that the bounty of 1d. per lb., which expired on 30th June last (1915), should be renewed

In the 1902 Tariff the duty on coffee, raw and kiln dried, was 3d. per lb., and on roasted or prepared coffee 5d. per lb. In the 1908 Tariff the rates were 3d. and 6d. respectively; the latter rates are continued in the present schedule. The 1907 Bounties Act provided for a bounty of 1d. per lb. on coffee grown in Australia by white labour, and bounties were paid as follow:—1909-10, £117; 1910-11, £112; 1911-12, £68; 1912-13, £125; 1913-14, £73; 1914-15, £71; 1915-16, £3. The period of the bounties expired on the 30th June, 1915. The position of the coffee-growing industry in Australia is set out in the following extract from the *Commonwealth Year-Book*, 1918:—

Queensland is the only State of the Commonwealth in which coffee-growing has been at all extensively tried, and here the result has, up to the present time, been far from satisfactory. The total area devoted to this crop reached its highest point in the season of 1901-2, when an area of 547 acres was recorded. The area then continued to decline to 1907-8, when it was as low as 256 acres. In subsequent seasons the area fluctuated somewhat, but on the whole there was a downward tendency, and in 1917-18 only 51 acres were recorded, with a yield of 16,242 lbs.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [2.47].—We may judge from the figures quoted by the Minister that the duty has been of no value in encouraging the cultivation of coffee in Australia. That being so, the duty becomes purely a revenue one, and the Committee should consider whether or not it should be reduced. Tea is admitted free of duty; coffee is an almost equally popular drink, and is used for exactly the same purpose. If the duties in the schedule are agreed to, we shall not be helping primary production, and there does seem to be a good case for the reduction of the duty.

Senator LYNCH.—Or its abolition.

Senator PRATTEN.—Or its abolition, if necessary. I do not wish to impose unnecessarily heavy taxes upon the consumers.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [2.49].—It is quite clear that the sums paid in bounties for coffee production did not exhaust the amount which Parliament voted for that purpose, and that

Parliament failed in its laudable endeavour to establish the coffee industry in Australia. The time has come when we should consider whether or not this duty should continue, having regard to the fact that so far it and a respectable bounty have failed to establish the industry. If Senator Pratten does not move for the abolition of the duty upon this household commodity, I shall do so.

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [2.50].—I think that the removal of the duty upon coffee would inflict an injustice upon those persons who, in the face of great difficulties, have persisted for years in their effort to establish the industry of coffee production in Australia. The additional amount which coffee will cost the people of the Commonwealth, by reason of the imposition of this duty, will be comparatively small, and the revenue will benefit to an equal extent. Coffee is not a beverage which is in such common use as is tea.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—It is a luxury, and not a necessity.

Senator CRAWFORD.—It is the drink of the more or less well-to-do people. More coffee is consumed in the *cafés* and after sumptuous lunches in leading hotels than is consumed in the houses of the poorer classes of people in Australia. The production of coffee has decreased because its price has not increased in the same ratio as has the cost of production. The growing and harvesting of this commodity involves a great deal of labour. Next to tea, there is probably no industry in which so much labour is required. The production of coffee is still a long way from the vanishing point, and I understand that in one district in Queensland—I refer to Buderim Mountain, which is about 70 or 80 miles from Brisbane—there has recently been an increase in the production of this article. We shall be doing a gross injustice if we give the happy despatch to this industry by abolishing the small measure of protection that it at present enjoys.

Senator LYNCH.—How many growers are there in the industry?

Senator CRAWFORD.—I cannot say offhand, because I did not for a moment imagine that this Committee would at-

tack a struggling industry in one of the remote States of the Commonwealth.

Senator PRATTEN.—Upon the figures it looks as if the industry has failed.

Senator CRAWFORD.—It has not failed completely. The latest statistics disclose a production of 16,000 lbs. of coffee. The industry is still yielding a livelihood to a few people in another State. I appeal to honorable senators to allow the existing duty to stand. It is a small protection as compared with the protection which has been afforded to other industries which do not employ anything like the same amount of labour. It is a white man's industry, and it is, therefore, entitled to all the encouragement which will be given to it under the present duty.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN (Western Australia) [2.55].—I indorse the views which have been expressed by Senator Crawford, and I think that Senator Pratten will be acting quite consistently with the principles which he has laid down for his own guidance if he supports this item. I agree with him that it is from luxuries that we should derive our revenue. Coffee is not an absolute necessity. We can get along perfectly well without it, and consequently it is an item from which we should receive revenue. If at the same time we can assist an industry which has been established in Queensland, although it is merely a struggling industry, we shall be killing two birds with the one stone.

Senator SENIOR (South Australia) [2.56].—I happen to have visited the only district in Queensland in which coffee is being grown, and I propose to relate my experiences there to honorable senators. At a place called Kuranda there were formerly thirty coffee planters. At the time of my visit there was only one. Some hundreds of acres had been placed under coffee cultivation, and the gentleman who was in charge of the plantation there was good enough to show me the whole of the processes of coffee production from the picking of the berries up to the drying, cleansing, and grinding of the coffee itself. He also showed me a photograph of a magnificent exhibit which he had had at various agricultural shows. When I inquired what had become of the twenty-nine other

growers who had been in the district, he replied that they had failed through not having been granted a sufficient measure of protection. He then went on to say that, although splendid coffee could be grown in that locality, its production there was unprofitable. He added, "I import coffee and sell it as coffee which has been grown in Queensland." If honorable senators think that this industry requires further encouragement, by all means let us increase the duty upon the article. I submit, however, that coffee is as much a necessity with many people as is tea. As a matter of fact, tea is a luxury. All the people who come from Central Europe and some parts of Asia are heavy coffee drinkers, and there are many of them in Queensland.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Does the honorable senator wish to give them cheap coffee?

Senator SENIOR.—I am surprised that some honorable senators should regard coffee as a luxury. So far as the production of this commodity in Queensland is concerned, the bounty has not been successful in establishing the industry. At Kuranda, the plantation which I visited had been almost destroyed.

Senator REID (Queensland) [3.0].—The statements made by Senator Senior in regard to the Queensland coffee industry are more or less correct. One of the greatest troubles with which coffee-growers have to contend is the cost of the labour involved in picking the berries, the union rates making the cost almost prohibitive. This duty by no means equalizes the difference between the cost of labour here and in the cheap-labour countries in which coffee is largely produced. In Queensland in many cases coffee plantations, which when in full bearing are a beautiful sight, have been replaced by sugar farms. In urging the Committee to agree to the duty as it stands, I would point out that coffee-growing may properly be described as a family industry. I know of a family, the members of which make a very good living by growing coffee, just outside Maryborough, in the south of Queensland. They grow, pick, and grind their own berries, and put on the market a really excellent coffee. I do not ask that the duty be increased, but there is certainly no reason why it should be re-

moved. Special efforts are being made to induce people to settle on the land, and many men would be inclined to do so if they knew that in connexion with their industry employment, that would not be attended by any injurious effect, could be found for their children. The process of picking coffee berries is very simple and school children during their holidays could be so employed with advantage to their own health and to the improvement of the industry. Coffee is not a luxury—it is a more or less common beverage—and I ask the Committee to allow the duty to remain.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [3.4].—The argument advanced by Senator Drake-Brockman that coffee is a luxury is completely answered by the figures quoted by Senator Russell showing that nearly 2,500,000 lbs. of coffee were imported last year, the duty yielding a revenue of £29,000. There are few people engaged in the industry, and although it has had the advantage of both a protective duty and a bounty, we find that, like the old horse under the auctioneer's hammer, it is "Going, going, almost gone!" It is for the Committee to say whether we should allow the Treasury to benefit to the extent of £29,000 a year by continuing this duty and to that extent adding to the cost of a very necessary household requirement while at the same time there is no immediate prospect of encouraging the industry.

Senator PEARCE.—Think of the poor, struggling citizens who call for coffee at the Hotel Australia!

Senator LYNCH.—In Senator Pearce we have a Daniel come to judgment. Or entering any humble caravanserai in the Commonwealth a man is invariably asked, "Will you have coffee or tea?" but a visitor to the Hotel Australia is never asked that question. With him it is a matter of champagne or beer. The honorable senator's suggestion is "to thin." It would be better, as Senator Duncan has said, to reduce the duty by one-half and to set aside £15,000 per annum to provide an annuity for those who are at present engaged in the industry. Even then we should be £15,000 a year to the good, in so far as effecting a reduction in this wholesome article

diet is concerned. We are not here to make the Tariff a mere tax-raising device. Our object should be to frame a Tariff that will encourage industries which stand in need of encouragement and not to support any wild-cat scheme for raising revenue without the compensating advantage of establishing an industry. That is the position in this case.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Unless coffee is a luxury.

Senator LYNCH.—Senator Drake-Brockman's argument in that respect falls to the ground. Even in the most humble restaurants in his own State a man is asked whether he will have coffee or tea. I am sure no honorable senator desires to destroy an industry that has the least chance of success, but it has been shown that this industry, although given every chance, is steadily declining. I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make sub-item (A) free.

Senator Sir THOMAS GLASGOW (Queensland) [3.8].—I support the request made by my colleague from Queensland, that the duty as fixed by another place should stand. I recognise that the statistics which have been quoted show that the industry has not progressed, but I have to inform honorable senators that only recently a move has been made to increase the production of coffee on the Buderim Mountain, in Queensland. A good many tropical products are grown in that district, and I know that coffee-planting there is on the increase.

Senator SENIOR (South Australia) [3.9].—I desire to know whether the sub-item relating to coffee and chicory could be dealt with separately? Chicory is grown in Australia, and I assume very little is imported.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Chicory is grown very extensively on Phillip Island. If the coffee duty goes the chicory duty must go.

Senator SENIOR.—South Australia grows sufficient chicory to meet its own needs. The non-success of coffee-growing in Australia hitherto is not a factor which is applicable to chicory-growing. Unless the Minister can show that some of the States are importing chicory largely—

Senator RUSSELL.—About 99 per cent. of the coffee imported has chicory mixed with it.

Senator SENIOR.—About 99 per cent. of the coffee imported arrives here in the green state, and is roasted here. I repeat that the growing of chicory in South Australia is sufficiently extensive to have done away with the need for the importation of any of that product. I do not want the duty to be removed, seeing that the industry is prosperous.

Senator PAYNE (Tasmania) [3.12].—So far as I know, Tasmania has not grown a single coffee plant, but I cannot give my approval to the abolition of the duty upon coffee. Information supplied to honorable senators this afternoon was sufficient to convince me of the wisdom of retaining the duty of 3d. per lb. on raw coffee. I refer to the statement that the growing of coffee on large areas has not, so far, proved a success in Queensland, but that it has been successful when engaged in under conditions where a family of growing children can be employed in picking the crop. I have been influenced, further, by the statements of Senator Sir Thomas Glasgow, that the cultivation of coffee is about to be considerably increased in a certain locality in Queensland. Anything tending to induce people to go out on the land and rear families on small holdings shall always have my support. One other consideration for the retention of the duty is that the Commonwealth Treasury must have revenue. The rate, in this instance, is not a heavy one. I regard it, indeed, as quite reasonable, and a fair means of adding to the revenue of the country.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [3.15].—In view of the statements of several honorable senators, particularly those of Senator Reid and Senator Sir Thomas Glasgow, concerning the prospects of coffee-growing in Queensland, I ask leave to withdraw my requested amendment.

Request, by leave, withdrawn.

Item agreed to.

Item 44—

Confectionery, cocoa and chocolate, viz.:—

(B)

- (2) Cocoa mass paste or slab, sweetened, per lb., British, 3d.; intermediate, 3½d., general, 3½d.; or ad val., British, 30 per cent.; intermediate, 40 per cent.; general, 40 per cent., whichever rate returns the higher duty.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [3.16].—I wish to raise the question of the relative incidence of sugar to-day at 6d. per lb. as compared with its bearing upon previous Tariffs, when the price was one-third of that which has been fixed for the present, and to cover the next two years. The confectionery industry is entirely dependent for its raw material upon sugar, and so far as its export is concerned, it has been practically placed—owing to the regulations of the price of the raw material—upon the basis of the world's parity. If the world's parity for sugar is 3d. per lb., and the Australian price now, and for a long while ahead, is 6d. per lb., these duties do very little more than make up the balance. The protection, therefore, is really very slight.

Senator CRAWFORD.—The present price of sugar in Great Britain is about £55 per ton.

Senator PRATTEN.—That is not the world's parity. The price is due to the costly accumulated stocks in Great Britain having not yet been worked off. But, as for sugar grown in Cuba and Java—

Senator CRAWFORD.—Confectionery is not made in Cuba and Java.

Senator PRATTEN.—Whether that be so or not, the honorable senator must know that confectionery is made on the Continent and in America from the raw material grown in Cuba and Java. I should say that the world's parity for sugar, new crop, is now about £25 per ton. Consequently, the world's parity for the manufacturer, provided that old stocks are worked off, is about £25 per ton, or a little more than half the price that the Australian manufacturers have to pay. This industry will, therefore, be subjected to competition from America, Holland, and England, so far as sweets and chocolates and things of that sort are concerned. Has the Minister (Senator Russell) any information upon the incidence of the present control price of sugar in Australia on these duties? In 1914, there was a fixed duty of 3d., or an *ad valorem* duty of 30 per cent., whichever was the greater. In 1920, there was a fixed duty of 3d., or an alternative *ad valorem* duty of 35 per cent. It is clear that if in 1914 Australian manufacturers could make confectionery

from sugar obtained at the world's parity price plus the duty of £6 a ton, and will have to pay in 1921 as much as £45 per ton for sugar for manufacture, while the world's parity is only £25, the incidence of the sugar position is that these duties afford very little if any protection to the Australian manufacturer. I know that Cadburys have come here, and are erecting a very fine factory at Hobart. I am not prepared to advocate the extraordinarily high duties which are justified by the present sugar position.

Senator REID.—How long will it remain? That is the trouble.

Senator PRATTEN.—Last night Senator Crawford appealed to the Committee to increase the duty on sugar by 50 per cent. The Minister rightly said that it would be time enough to raise the whole question of the incidence of the sugar duties when the present sugar agreement expired, as that agreement practically displaces the duties provided in the schedule. Great Britain deliberately sacrificed her sugar industry for the sake of cultivating the subsidiary industries based on sugar as a raw material.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Are you suggesting that that is an example which can well be followed in Australia, which has a large tropical area?

Senator PRATTEN.—I am not suggesting anything. I am putting the facts of the position as I see them. If manufacturers of confectionery and sweets in other countries are able during the next eighteen months, which is, roughly, the currency of the sugar agreement, to get raw sugar for manufacture for export to Australia at about £20, or even £25 per ton, and the local manufacturer has to pay £45 a ton for sugar to be made into manufactures for consumption within the Commonwealth, these duties are no protection, and approximately only make up the difference.

Senator PEARCE.—Is that why Cadburys came here?

Senator PRATTEN.—I believe the temporary sugar arrangement was not taken into consideration when the British manufacturers came to Australia. If they had been certain that they would always have to pay £45 a ton for sugar for the manufacture of chocolates and sweets for consumption within Austral

while they could manufacture them at Bourneville, in Birmingham, with sugar at £20 a ton, and only pay these duties, there would have been no hesitation about what they would do.

Senator LYNCH.—When they decided, they had the prospect of falling prices.

Senator PRATTEN.—Yes; but the decision was made probably nearly two years ago, when sugar in Great Britain was at its maximum, and when pessimists like Senator Crawford thought that that maximum price for sugar would be sustained for a long time owing to sugar going out of cultivation. I merely raise this question, and if the Minister has any information as to the representations made to him by the confectioners, I should like to hear it.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [3.25].—During the war we put an embargo on the importation of confectionery. That is rather a brigand's method of dealing with trade, but it was more than justified in war time. Under it we have built up the industry so successfully that it is practically self-supporting; and although we have removed the embargo, very little importation of confectionery is taking place. Excuses and apologies may be made, but I have never met any of those innocent men who "do not quite understand the position" before they put £50,000 into a business. The world is not run on those lines. Men with capital look around and decide carefully whether they will go into an enterprise. Four of the biggest firms, Nestlé's, Cadburys, Frys, and Pascalls, have started business in Australia. They may have misjudged the time at which the contract expires, but I am sure they looked two or three years ahead. By putting an embargo on imports, Australia learned what could be done in regard to confectionery, and I have no hesitation in saying that those firms thought they could be better off for certain portions of their confectionery manufacture by coming to Australia than by remaining in England. To-day, despite the cost of war, manufacturers in Australia are running out confectionery effectively under existing conditions.

Senator CRAWFORD.—I think sweets are cheaper to-day than they were when sugar was selling at 3d. per lb.

Senator RUSSELL.—We all know that they are profitable, and that the retailers, especially about the theatres and concert halls, are, I will not say profiteering, but charging very high prices.

Senator PRATTEN.—If the price of sugar is doubled, the price of sweets must be doubled.

Senator RUSSELL.—That is so; but the retail confectioners are in many cases charging more than 100 per cent. profit. I do not know who gets all the profit, but it should be limited. We cannot do better than leave the Tariff as it stands, because little or no confectionery is being imported owing to the successful development of the industry in Australia.

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [3.29].—The price of sugar must make some difference in the cost of production of confectionery; but, after all, in the case of a great deal of confectionery on the market at present, the cost of the sugar is a very small item indeed. In any confectionery shop it is impossible to get sweets under about 2s. 6d. a pound, and if a person desires to purchase a box of the best Australian chocolates, the price is 25s., although in those chocolates there is not more than 3 lbs. of sugar. I have been supplied with some figures showing the progress that has been made in the confectionery industry. In 1914 the value of the output was £1,657,045, and the value of the materials was £1,570,902. The difference between the value of the output and the value of the materials was just about £600,000. In 1918 the value of the output was £2,969,573, and the value of the materials used, £1,894,187, showing that the value added by manufacture was over £1,100,000. During the war, owing to the exceedingly reasonable price at which confectionery manufacturers were able to obtain sugar, and to their having practically the monopoly of the market, they were able to increase their output by over £1,250,000.

Senator DE LAEGIE.—Put the figures into pounds weight.

Senator CRAWFORD.—I have not the figures showing the pounds weight. At any rate, we know that there was no

shortage of confectionery—that, instead of decreasing, the business increased, and very large profits were made, not only by the manufacturers, but by the retailers as well.

Senator LYNCH.—They were bound to progress, seeing that they had the market to themselves.

Senator CRAWFORD. — Yes; and they got their raw material at a very low price. I understand that the majority of honorable senators have been simply deluged by requests from the producers of different commodities for increases in duty. I must confess, on the other hand, that I have received no communication from the confectionery trade complaining that the import duties are too low. The fact is that the confectionery business, on both the manufacturing and the retail sides, is particularly prosperous to-day. But even if the profits diminish a little for a few months, on account of the price of sugar, surely the low price at which sugar has been sold for the past six or seven years ought to count for something. After all, the cost of sugar is a very small proportion of the price at which confectionery is retailed in Melbourne and elsewhere in Australia.

Senator BOLTON.—Not more than half.

Senator CRAWFORD.—I have not seen any sweets sold under about 2s. 6d. a lb., though the sugar in those sweets does not cost 5d. I suppose that the sugar in the sweets does not represent, on an average, 10 per cent. of the price at which the sweets are retailed in this city. What is the cost of the sugar in a 25s. box of chocolates? These boxes are to be seen in nearly every confectioner's window, and the presumption is that some people buy them, though I confess I have not done so. We must remember that in chocolates and other sweets glucose is sometimes used instead of sugar, and there is an import duty of 12s. per cwt. on glucose, or exactly twice the duty imposed on sugar.

Senator PRATTEN. — The honorable senator would sooner that sugar was used, although it is at a high price.

Senator CRAWFORD.—No. There are certain classes of confectionery for which glucose is necessary—for which there must be some sweet material which will not crystallize or harden. Thus glu-

cose is used in many cases where ordinary sugar is not suitable.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [3.36].—From the remarks of Senator Crawford I thought he would conclude with a proposal for a reduction of the duty. The honorable senator is an acknowledged authority on sugar production; he knows that the confectionery industry depends in a great measure, if not absolutely, on a supply of cheap sugar, and he tells us plainly and unequivocally that the chocolate manufacturers are having a right royal time with profits. We are informed that the value of the finished product is ever so much more than that of the sugar used, to the extent of something like 400 or 500 per cent. We all know the extraordinarily high prices at which chocolates are sold; but Senator Crawford touched on this phase of the question very lightly—not even with a feather duster—because the confectioners are good customers of the sugar-grower. But where does the consumer “come in”? We have a proposal to impose duties of 3d. and 3½d., or, alternatively, 30 and 40 per cent., whichever returns the higher rate, according to the proviso always inserted for the benefit of the revenue. It may be assumed that a duty of 40 per cent. is lower than 3½d. per lb., so that we have an impost in the neighbourhood of 45 or 50 per cent. All this shows that we are imposing altogether uncalled-for duties in the name of Protection—duties which are eventually reflected in an increased cost to the consumer on many necessities of life. In the United States of America, in the colonial days, a very modest commencement was made; but subsequently there was the McKinley Tariff—which shocked the world, and shut out many manufacturers, including British—with duties running from 30 to 40 per cent. Then came the Dingley Tariff, with even higher rates of about 50 per cent. Here in Australia, with a population of 5,000,000, and an undeveloped industrial organization, we are creeping quite close to the standard attained by America, with a population of about 100,000,000. That in my opinion, is running Protection mad, and I speak as a Protectionist. In support of the view I take, I could not call more incontestable evidence than the

speech of Senator Crawford, who proved that the manufacturing of sweets is a highly profitable industry, but sat down without submitting any proposal. With a view of entering a protest, I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to amend sub-section (2) of sub-item (a) by leaving out the word "higher" and inserting in lieu thereof the word "lower."

Senator BOLTON.—Can the Minister give the price per lb. of imported unsweetened cocoa paste?

Senator RUSSELL.—I am unable to supply the information, as no separate record is kept of the quantity imported.

Request negatived.

Senator PRATTEN.—Does sub-item E include lemon peel?

Senator RUSSELL.—No.

Item agreed to.

Item 45 (Copra) agreed to.

Item 46 (Egg albumen, dry).

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [3.47].—Items 47, 48, 49, and 50 are associated with this item, and as I desire to refer to the importation of Chinese eggs, will the Minister report progress at this stage.

Progress reported.

PAPERS.

The following papers were presented:—

War Service Homes Act.—Land acquired in New South Wales at—Mayfield East; West Maitland; Weston.

ADJOURNMENT.

RAILWAY MATERIAL.

Senator PEARCE (Western Australia—Minister for Defence) [3.50].—In moving—

That the Senate do now adjourn,

I wish to read a statement which has been received from the Commissioner of Railways, through the Minister for Works and Railways, in reply to some remarks made by Senator Wilson during the discussion of the Supply Bill. The Commissioner says—

In returning the attached extract from *Mansard*, No. 83, of 22nd inst. (your 21/278), in which Senator Wilson directs attention to—

(1) alleged lax administration of this Department in failing to realize on used construction machinery and

material lying at Port Augusta, and that a gentleman he met had been unable to purchase certain trucks he required;

(2) hundreds of picks and a number of railway motor tricycles exposed to the weather;

I have to advise in regard to No. (1) that shortly after the opening of the line for traffic a schedule was prepared of all surplus plant and material. This schedule was circulated throughout Australia, hundreds of copies being posted to likely buyers and users of such plant and material, and, in addition, advertisements were inserted in all the leading papers of Australia inviting attention to the material available for sale. As a result of this and subsequent action taken, plant and material have been sold to the value of £31,195. The greater portion still on hand has been specially retained for our own requirements, or consists of construction plant, such as track-laying machinery, rail presses, adzing and boring machines, which cannot be disposed of, but are available for further construction work. There is also other plant on hand, such as motor tractors, for which a reasonable offer could not be obtained.

So far as the sale of trucks mentioned is concerned, it was decided to retain a certain number for departmental use, and the remainder—to the number of several hundred—were readily sold.

The buyer presumably referred to by Senator Wilson desired to purchase a number of trucks which had been specially fitted for the carriage of firewood on narrow-gauge lines. He was informed that they could not be sold, and others somewhat similar were eventually built for him by the Department.

In regard to No. (2), during my recent inspection of the line I instructed that all surplus picks in excess of the number each gang required for their work should be sent to Port Augusta. It was probably these picks that Senator Wilson saw.

Although I do not know yet the exact number so returned, I doubt whether the total would exceed 100. Even if it were a greater number, seeing that the Trans-Australian Railway is over 1,000 miles in length a fact which honorable members often overlook—the stock would not be excessive.

In connexion with motor tricycles: it is possible that one or two, either worn out or awaiting repairs, may have been lying in the maintenance yard. There are no motor tricycles along the railway, gangs being equipped with a four-wheel motor trolley, which is constantly in use, as well as hand tricycles and trollies. It is probably the hand tricycle to which Senator de Largie refers.

Copies of schedules containing particulars of plant and material offered for sale are attached for the information of the honorable the Minister.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Senate adjourned at 3.53 p.m.

Senate.

Tuesday, 2 August, 1921.

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. T. Givens) took the chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

DEATH OF THE HONORABLE T. J. RYAN, K.C., M.P.

Senator PEARCE (Western Australia—Minister for Defence) [3.1].—(*By leave*).—I move—

That this Senate records its sincere regret at the death of the member for West Sydney (the Honorable Thomas Joseph Ryan, K.C.), and expresses its profound sympathy with his widow and the members of his family in their bereavement.

The appalling suddenness of Mr. Ryan's death must have impressed us all. It is but two weeks since the late member for West Sydney was present in the House of Representatives, apparently on the full tide of a successful public career, and in the full vigour of manhood. His was a dominant personality, which made itself felt in both State and Federal politics. In Queensland, he had risen to the highest position in political life, and in Federal politics, he had attained a prominent place. With force and pertinacity as a political fighter, he combined the grace of a charming manner, which, at no time, perhaps, was more noticeable than during the last week of his parliamentary service, when, in the midst of political strife, he was able to hold out the right hand of friendship to those with whom he was vigorously contending in the political arena. The standard of public life cannot rise higher than the standard of the lives of the individual members of Parliament, and it is essential to the welfare of the Commonwealth that it shall be a high one. The intellectual attainments of Mr. Ryan, and his consequent power and force, cause his death to be not merely a party, but a national loss. The Commonwealth Government has arranged with the Government of Queensland to honour his remains with a State funeral; but we feel the inadequateness of both acts and words to console those whose loss is the greatest—his nearest and dearest, his widow and chil-

dren. Mrs. Ryan was a true helpmate of her husband, and in public life was of the greatest assistance to him. We can only pray that the Great Comforter of the widow and the fatherless may sustain them in their great loss. At this moment all political animosities, all political differences, fade out of sight, and in passing this motion, we join together in recording our sense of the loss which the community has sustained by the death of a man who, having rendered service to his country, has been cut down in the full vigour of manhood, by this early closing of his career.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [3.6].—As a representative of the State of New South Wales, where the late Mr. Ryan also represented a constituency, I rise to second the motion. For the third time within a few short months, we have heard within the walls of this Parliament the rustling of the wings of the dread Angel of Death. We mourn Mr. Ryan as one who, in the short time that he was a member of the House of Representatives, impressed his personality on that Chamber and on the Parliament. The more he became known the more was he respected. He has been cut off in the prime of life, in the full vigour of his intellectual powers. His death is a sacrifice to what he considered his duty, for duty means following the course which one conceives to be right. Those of us who travelled often backwards and forwards between New South Wales and Victoria with Mr. Ryan probably knew him better than other members of the Parliament; and all who were brought into close touch with him found his disposition genial, urbane, and in every respect admirable. He had many political friends and political opponents; but outside of politics he had not, I think, many real enemies. A short time ago, in connexion with the death of a colleague, he uttered, in the other Chamber words eloquent that I may be pardoned in quoting them now, because to my mind, they exactly fit this occasion. The speaker who has now himself been called away then said—

Such happenings as this should incline us to think more kindly and generously of one another in public life. The suddenness of death makes us realize what frail creatures we are. It should certainly make us feel humble when we are shown how truly in the midst of life we are in death.

We now express in words as we would in actions, were it possible, our sincere sorrow at the death of a prominent Australian, who was a leading member of his party. He lived a strenuous, but fair, political life, and now that his voice is hushed in death, our hope is that he may rest in peace.

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [3.10].—As one of the representatives in the Senate of the State of Queensland, where the late Mr. Ryan lived for a considerable period, and of which he was Premier for some years, I beg to support the motion which has been so sympathetically moved by the Acting Leader of the Government in the Senate (Senator Pearce) and seconded by Senator Pratten. In doing so, I desire to associate myself with their kindly and commendatory references to our deceased friend and late colleague in this Parliament, who has been taken from us with such tragic suddenness. It seems to me but yesterday that I heard the late honorable gentleman speaking in another place of the brevity and uncertainty of life in connexion with the death of the Honorable James Page. At that time, little did any of us think that Mr. Ryan would be the next member of the Federal Parliament to be claimed by death. While we must all reverently bow to the will of Providence, we cannot help marvelling why one who had scarcely reached middle age, who physically was so robust, whose mind was so alert, and who was so richly endowed with natural ability, should so suddenly be called away. After attaining manhood, he has been allowed to live but half the allotted span. But perhaps, after all, life should not be measured by years alone, and if it is to be measured by effort and achievement, the late Mr. Ryan has lived longer than most men, for his was a strenuous, purposeful, and successful career. In life most of us regarded the late Mr. Ryan as a political opponent—I am sure that is how he desired us to regard him—but all such thoughts are forgotten in the great sorrow that has overtaken us. To-day we mourn his loss as that of a personal friend, a capable public man, and as a worthy son of Australia. Yet our loss is small when compared with that of those who were near and dear to him, and whose hearts to-day are stricken with grief at the loss of a husband and father.

To them we can but offer, in terms of the motion, our sincerest sympathy, and pray that in passing through the valley of the shadow they may be Divinely sustained and comforted.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [3.14].—It may seem somewhat inappropriate for me to add to what has already been said concerning the death of the Honorable T. J. Ryan; but before I conclude I hope to supply a special reason for expressing my regret and sympathy concerning the death of our late friend. His death has come upon us with the suddenness of a thunder-clap. A few days ago—in fact, only a few hours ago—the late Mr. Ryan was full of life and spirit and abounding hopes for the future; but he is now no more. His death brings forcibly home to us the uncertainty of life and the slender thread which binds us to this fleeting and uncertain existence. He has gone, and all that has been said concerning both his private and political capacity I fully indorse. For those he has left, including his faithful wife, we have nothing but the deepest sympathy. Like a true and devoted woman, she was beside her husband in life, and she was also at her place in the hour of death. We can only trust that the High Providence will guard those he has left and the spirit of the departed dead.

The special reason why I wish to add my expression of sympathy is this: If I may be pardoned for sounding a personal note, I may say that I recall the fact that during recent years I adopted a certain attitude in the public life of this country which brought me words of approval from many people, but which, on the other hand, caused feelings of bitter resentment. But, notwithstanding that, so long as I have known the late Mr. Ryan, both as Premier of Queensland, when I was as much with him as I was later on against him, and in later years, during which there has been a change in our political beliefs, there has been no change in our personal relationship. When I had the experience of treading the high road of liberty, I always found in the late Mr. Ryan not only unasked uniform courtesy, but one who made the high road to liberty easier, and as regards the right to think fully and independently, one who also made it safer for future generations to tread. In the death of Mr. Ryan a gaping breach has been made in the

public life of this country, and because of the friendly handshake with which he has always greeted me, I have been prompted to offer my personal appreciation of one who was a good citizen; a scholar, and an honorable public man.

Question resolved in the affirmative, honorable senators standing in their places.

Senate adjourned—at 3.20 p.m.

Senate.

Wednesday, 3 August, 1921.

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. T. Givens) took the chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

PETITION.

Senator DUNCAN presented a petition from the Primary Producers Union of New South Wales, comprising the Graziers Association of New South Wales, the Stock-owners Association of New South Wales, the Farmers and Settlers Association of New South Wales, and the New South Wales Sheep-breeders Association, and signed on behalf of those organizations by their respective presidents, praying for the reduction of certain duties upon articles affecting chiefly the primary producers.

Petition received and read.

KINEMATOGRAPH FILMS.

Senator RUSSELL.—On the 27th July Senator Pratten asked the Minister representing the Minister for Trade and Customs the following questions:—

What were the total importations in lineal feet of kinematograph films for the year ending 30th June, 1921, from (a) United States, (b) Great Britain, (c) France, (d) other?

I am now able to furnish the honorable senator with the following information:—United States, 15,244,974 lineal feet; Great Britain, 1,518,814 lineal feet; France, 156,048 lineal feet; other, 319,070 lineal feet.

NEWS PAPER.

Senator RUSSELL.—On 28th July Senator Pratten asked the following questions:—

1. What was the total importation of news paper into the Commonwealth, in tons, and

what was its approximate value, for the five-year periods ending 30th June, 1910; 30th June, 1915; 30th June, 1920, and for the year ending 30th June, 1921?

2. What proportion of imports was derived from (a) Great Britain, (b) Canada, (c) United States, (d) Scandinavia?

I am now in a position to furnish the honorable senator with the following information:—

1. Five years ending 30th June, 1910, £2,909,107; five years ending 30th June, 1915, £3,974,581; five years ending 30th June, 1920, £7,100,318; year ending 30th June, 1921, 1,653,944 cwt., valued at £3,460,750.

2.

	Five years ending 30.6.10.	Five years ending 31.6.05.	Five years ending 30.6.20.	Year ending 30.6.21.	
	£	£	£	Cwt.	£
Great Britain	1,035,742	1,531,811	1,042,597	184,716	695,890
Canada	648,808	643,821	1,946,983	609,220	977,698
U.S.A.	676,492	697,286	1,786,056	62,009	265,716
Scandinavia	252,558	854,794	2,152,210	712,932	1,337,106

NOTE.—The quantity was not recorded prior to 1st July, 1919.

NAVIGATION ACT.

Senator ROWELL.—On 15th July I asked the Leader of the Government in the Senate a question relating to passengers travelling by mail steamers who had booked their passages to Perth not being allowed to proceed on those steamers to the other States. Has the Minister any further information on the point?

Senator PEARCE.—The following information is furnished by Mr. Percy Whitton, Comptroller-General of Customs:—

In response to the request contained in the Secretary's minute of 18th July, 1921, forwarding attached extract from *Hansard* of 15th July, 1921, relative to a question asked by Senator Rowell, and with reference to the promise made by the Minister for Repatriation that inquiries would be made in the matter, the following information is submitted in order that a reply may be made to Senator Rowell:—

The ruling given by departmental officers in Fremantle and other ports that passengers by an oversea mail steamer, which was not licensed to engage in the coasting trade, could not be carried beyond the ports for which they originally booked was in accordance with an instruction issued in November last, based on advice by the Crown Law Department on the interpretation of the term "through ticket," as used in section 7 of the Navigation Act, which defines engagement in the coasting trade.

The matter has been further considered by the Law officers, who now advise that

"through ticket" includes a ticket issued from a port outside Australia to a port within Australia, and extended from that port to another port, whether on the payment of the additional fare or not, if the person had not finally left the ship at the port to which the ticket was originally issued.

Instructions in accordance with this opinion are being issued to all ports, so that in future any passengers by incoming mail steamers who desire to extend their passages to ports beyond those for which they originally booked will be able to do so.

SENATE COMMITTEES.

SUPPLY OF PENCILS.

Senator DUNCAN.—I should like to obtain information regarding the stationery and materials supplied to Senate Committees. I am a member of a Select Committee of the Senate which sat today. I notice that the lead pencils supplied to the whole of these Committees are called "the Iron Duke," and are made in Japan. Is it not possible to observe the spirit of the White Australia principle, which we have so often indorsed, and to obtain, for the use of honorable members of the Senate at any rate, lead pencils which are made by white labour?

Senator PEARCE.—The matter is not within the control of Ministers. It may be a question for the President.

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. T. Givens).—I shall give the matter my attention.

IMPORTATION OF BANANAS.

Senator RUSSELL.—On the 28th July Senator Pratten asked the Minister representing the Minister for Trade and Customs the following question:—

What were the importations of bananas in cents into Australia for the five-year periods ending 30th June, 1910, 30th June, 1915, 30th June, 1920, and for the year ending 30th June, 1921.

I informed the honorable senator that the particulars were being obtained. I am now able to furnish the honorable senator with the following information:—

Five years ending 30th June, 1910, 701,451 cents; five years ending 30th June, 1915, 1,191,183 cents; five years ending 30th June, 1920, 1,177,075 cents; year ending 30th June, 1921, 107,368 cents.

PAPERS.

The following papers were presented:—

Arbitration (Public Service) Act.—Determination by the Arbitrator, &c.—No. 4 of 1921—Meat Inspectors' Association, Commonwealth of Australia.

Lands Acquisition Act.—Land acquired for Repatriation purposes at Randwick, New South Wales.

New Guinea.—Ordinance No. 9 of 1921.—Expropriation (No. 2).

Public Service Act—

Appointments.—C. L. Biggs, Department of Health; L. S. Klingender, Department of the Treasury.

Promotion of J. N. Dennis, Department of the Treasury.

POSITION IN RUSSIA.

Senator LYNCH.—I ask the Acting Leader of the Government in the Senate (Senator Pearce) whether he has received a request from the *Brisbane Worker*, the *Sydney Worker*, the *Labour Call*, and the *Western Australian Worker*, and other papers in this country, which have expressed admiration of the existing social order in Russia, that the Government should forward to the first Minister in Russia, Mr. Lenin, their congratulations on his success in emancipating the proletariat of that country. I also desire to ask whether the Government will indicate to those journals that it is ready to forward their congratulations, and also ask if they have prepared their messages?

Senator PEARCE.—So far as I am aware, the Government have not been asked to do as the honorable senator suggests, and in this case it would be well to wait until we are asked.

Senator LYNCH. — I now desire to ask whether the Government have considered, or will consider, the necessity of acting in conjunction with the Imperial Government with a view to assisting the famine-stricken people of Russia?

Senator PEARCE.—I shall bring the matter raised by the honorable senator under the notice of the Cabinet.

ADJOURNMENT (Formal).

ANZAC TWEED INDUSTRY.

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. T. Givens).—I have received an intimation from Senator Elliott that he desires to move the adjournment of the Senate until 10 a.m. to-morrow in order to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz.:—"The neglect of the

Repatriation Department to secure the interests of the employees in the Hand Loom weaving business, known as the Anzac Tweed Industry, when handing over property of the Department, to certain trustees for the purpose of providing employment for returned soldiers."

Four honorable senators having risen in their places,

Senator ELLIOTT (Victoria) [3.24].—I move—

That the Senate, at its rising, adjourn until 10 a.m. on Thursday.

I trust I have not taken the Minister for Defence (Senator Pearce) by surprise—

Senator PEARCE.—I rise to a point of order. The Minister for Repatriation (Senator E. D. Millen) informed me that Senator Elliott had notified him that he intended to move the adjournment of the Senate to discuss this question. I thereupon asked the Minister for Repatriation to instruct his officers to supply me with the file, which has been done. On perusing the file, I find that there appears to be a lawsuit pending in regard to this matter, as there is a communication from Messrs. Lynch, Macdonald, and Elliott, dated 25th February, 1921, headed "Streeter *versus* Cull and others, Anzac Tweed Industry." Attached to that letter is a copy of an agreement, and on the back of the agreement these words appear—

ANZAC TWEED INDUSTRY.

COPY OF AGREEMENT.

In the Supreme Court, 1921, Herbert John Streeter, plaintiff, William Ambrose Cull, Gilbert Joseph Cullen Dyett, and Robert Alexandra Lowry, defendants. This is the copy agreement marked with the letter (a) produced, and shown to Herbert John Streeter, at the time of swearing his affidavit this 23rd day of February, 1921, before me, Harold Cohen, Commissioner of the Supreme Court of Victoria for taking affidavits.

I find further there is a letter to Messrs. Lynch, Macdonald, and Elliott, in reply to the other letter, which is also headed Streeter *versus* Cull and others—Anzac tweed industry. On noticing that, I asked Mr. Kealy, of the Repatriation Department, who brought the file to me, to ascertain if there was a case before the Court dealing with this matter, and Mr. Kealy gave me the following statement:—

I am informed by Mr. J. C. McPhee, Secretary to the Repatriation Commission, that, so far as the Court was concerned, it was left to the counsel for both parties to come to an

agreement. Messrs. Derham, Robertson, and Derham, counsel for the trustees, have been in touch with counsel for the other side, but, so far, the case is not settled.

T. A. KEALY.

3rd August, 1921.

It therefore appears that this matter is the subject of a lawsuit, and I ask your ruling, Mr. President, as to whether this matter can be discussed while the matter is *sub judice*.

The PRESIDENT.—Perhaps Senator Elliott may wish to speak on that point.

Senator ELLIOTT.—I do not think the case before the Court touches the question in dispute at all. The position is that an injunction has been obtained restraining the trustees from proceeding with the registration of a proposed company; but that does not touch the matter of the Minister for Repatriation (Senator Millen) handing over the property to trustees.

Senator PEARCE.—Is not the lawsuit on the subject of the property being handed over?

Senator ELLIOTT.—Incidentally, it may mean that the men are to be deprived of this property if the company is formed; but the Court has granted an injunction restraining the company from proceeding. The injunction has not been made perpetual, and the matter has been adjourned, with a view to a settlement being arrived at.

Senator PRATTEN.—Is the matter to which the honorable senator intends to refer *sub judice*?

Senator PEARCE.—Is not the agreement the subject of the controversy?

Senator ELLIOTT.—Something may turn on the interpretation of the trust deed entered into by the Minister for Repatriation. That is subject to the interpretation by the Court; but I do not think any discussion here will prejudice the case in any way.

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. T. Givens).—The point of order raised by the Minister for Defence (Senator Pearce) is, of course, a very important one, and, although our Standing Orders are silent in this connexion, fortunately we have ample precedents to guide us. As honorable senators are aware, where our Standing Orders are silent, this Senate, as well as all other Parliaments or branches of a Legislature, are guided by the practice of the House of Commons.

The whole question turns on whether the matter is *sub judice* or not. From the statements of the Minister for Defence, speaking on behalf of the Repatriation Department, and of Senator Elliott, it appears to me that the terms upon which this business was handed over by the Repatriation Department to the trustees is a matter which is now awaiting settlement by the Court, because certain parties, according to the statement by Senator Elliott, have initiated proceedings to prevent the trustees from taking any action in regard to it. Therefore, the whole question, in my opinion, is involved in litigation. The last edition of *May*, on page 296, clearly lays down the practice of the House of Commons as follows:—

Matters awaiting the adjudication of a Court of law should not be brought forward in debate. This rule was observed by Sir Robert Peel and Lord John Russell, both by the wording of the speech from the Throne and by their procedure in the House, regarding Mr. O'Connell's case, and has been maintained by rulings from the Chair.

That ruling has been followed by innumerable others, and it is obviously a good one, because it would be highly improper for any person occupying a position of privilege in this Senate to seek to prejudice a case which is awaiting judgment by a Court. Therefore, as I gather from Senator Elliott's remarks that the terms upon which this property was handed over is a matter that will come before a Court, by whom it will, no doubt, be weighed, and a judgment given, and as the case is still awaiting adjudication, following the practice of the House of Commons I must rule that the honorable senator is out of order.

Senator LYNCH.—Might not a trumped-up case hamper the freedom of Parliament?

The PRESIDENT.—I have nothing to do with that.

CUSTOMS TARIFF BILL.

In Committee (Consideration resumed from 29th July, *vide* page 10672):
Schedule.

DIVISION IV.—AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS AND GROCERIES.

Item 46—

Egg albumen, dry, per lb., British, 2s. 6d.;
intermediate and general, 3s.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [3.34].—I should like Senator Russell to explain the items relating to the importation of eggs in different forms and shapes. There is a considerable export of eggs from Asia to Europe, and I believe that there is a controversy proceeding in Great Britain as to the wholesomeness of these eggs. I am inclined to the view that it is not to the benefit of Australia that any eggs should be imported. It seems to me that they must come in at a cheap rate for use in inferior products. We ought to produce all we require in Australia, and I would like some information upon the point with a view of seeing whether effective steps should not be taken to prevent their importation.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [3.35].—In ordinary circumstances the duty upon eggs has been proved to be very effective. While we imported 53,577 dozen eggs in shell in 1913, and 63,065 dozen in 1914-15, the importations rose to 649,399 dozen in 1915-16. Eggs were not too freely produced in Australia in that period, because fowl food was dear. Australia was importing wheat from Argentine. But when food for poultry became more plentiful, and its price had been reduced, the importation of eggs gradually diminished to 35,672 dozen in 1916-17, 9,171 dozen in the following year, 2,633 dozen in 1918-19, and 4,015 dozen last year. The duty on eggs in shell throughout has been 6d. per dozen, and the rates applying to eggs in other forms, such as egg albumen, dry, egg contents, dry, egg in liquid form, are in proportion according to weight and value. For instance, albumen, the white of the egg, which is most valuable for certain purposes, pays a higher rate of duty than is imposed on other forms of egg, such as egg powders, which are imported for use in tanning leather. When Australia is fully back to normal prices for fowl food, it should not only supply its own requirements, but should also engage in the export of eggs. There is no doubt that the struggling poultry keeper needs some form of protection, particularly in drought periods, when he is compelled to pay higher prices for the food his fowls consume, and to face the competition of the cheap product of other countries. Egg

albumen, which is used in pharmacy, photography, and confectionery, will be called upon to pay duty as follows:—British, 2s. 6d.; intermediate and general, 3s. In 1913 we imported £1,046 worth, in 1914-15 the importation was valued at £1,107; in 1915-16, at £3,842; in 1916-17, at £1,838; in 1917-18, at £1,708; in 1918-19, at £94; and last year at £1,520. I find that $3\frac{1}{2}$ ozs. of dry albumen are equal to 1 dozen fresh eggs.

Senator KEATING.—In nutritive value, or what?

Senator RUSSELL.—I take it that it means for the purpose for which the albumen is imported. I do not suppose that albumen is imported for eating purposes, as people would naturally prefer to eat fresh eggs.

Senator KEATING.—But it is edible.

Senator RUSSELL.—I suppose that it is. Egg contents, being yolk and albumen combined, are dutiable at the rates of 1s. 4d., 1s. 8d., and 1s. 8d. per lb. under the different columns of the Tariff. The importations in 1913-14 were valued at £63, in 1914-15 nil, in 1915-16 £180, in 1916-17 £1,631, in 1917-18 nil, in 1918-19 nil, and £2 in 1919-20. This article is used by pastrycooks.

Senator KEATING.—Where are these goods imported from?

Senator RUSSELL.—I shall come to that later; I want to make a connected statement. There are no importations of eggs not in the shell and in liquid form. Under the Tariff, eggs not in the shell and in liquid form imported for use in industries other than those for the preparation of articles of food and denatured are admitted free under departmental by-laws.

Senator PRATTEN.—This article is used in connexion with the preparation of leather.

Senator RUSSELL.—I believe it is used by tanners; but, as none was imported, I am glad to say that those requiring the article have been able to obtain their supplies in Australia. As this provision of the Tariff has not been availed of, it is evident that the demand for the denatured article is very small, and any demand that may exist can be supplied in Australia. The article is used by tanners in the preparation of leather. The duties on egg yolk dried are 1s., 1s., and 1s. 6d. per lb. in the dif-

ferent columns of the Tariff. My notes show that, in connexion with an application for reduction of duty on this item, the Inter-State Commission stated that the evidence in support of the application did not afford any sufficient reason for an alteration of the duties. The duties on eggs in the shell are 6d., 8d., and 9d. per dozen. The importations in 1913-14 were 53,577 dozen, valued at £1,748; in 1914-15, 63,065 dozen, valued at £2,431; in 1915-16, 649,399 dozen, valued at £27,791; in 1916-17, 35,672 dozen, valued at £1,458; in 1917-18, 9,171 dozen, valued at £434; in 1918-19, 2,633 dozen, valued at £169; in 1919-20, 4,015 dozen, valued at £230.

Senator KEATING.—How much per dozen would those eggs be valued at?

Senator RUSSELL.—For the last few years they have been imported chiefly as ships' stores. The value works out at about 1s. per dozen.

Senator KEATING.—According to the figures given, some would be valued at less than 1d. per dozen. Has the Minister given, in his figures, the revenue derived from the duty, or the value of the imports?

Senator RUSSELL.—I have given the value of the imports. I have already said that the duties on egg-powders are based upon an average duty of 6d. per dozen on eggs in the shell.

Senator KEATING.—The figures given by the Minister would represent in some cases a value of less than 1d. per dozen for eggs in the shell.

Senator RUSSELL.—I understand that, for the last three years, the average value has been 1s. per dozen.

Senator KEATING.—Where do these eggs come from mostly?

Senator RUSSELL.—Mostly from China, though none have come from there for some time past. The figures I have quoted show that in 1915-16 the importations were 649,399 dozen. That was at a time when poultry feed was difficult to obtain in Australia. The value of the eggs imported in 1915-16 was £27,791. Of the quantity imported in that year, China supplied 614,206 dozen. Although this quantity was not large in proportion to the Australian production, it has to be remembered that the importations occurred outside the regular laying season in Australia, and consequently have a

much greater effect on the Australian market than they would have if imported when eggs were plentiful. Another important fact to be borne in mind is that the price of food for poultry has enormously increased during recent years, rendering the cost of production much greater than it was formerly, and thus tending to discourage the industry. These facts justify increases in the general Tariff, which is the only one that operates.

Senator ROWELL.—What was the old duty?

Senator RUSSELL.—The old duty on eggs in shell was 6d. per dozen, and this schedule proposes a general Tariff of 9d. The British preferential Tariff is 6d., and the intermediate 8d., but there are practically no importations under them.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [3.52].—The Minister's explanation is generally satisfactory. Are eggs in pulp imported, and, if so, under what item?

Senator RUSSELL.—Item 48—egg in liquid form.

Senator PRATTEN.—I am referring to egg pulp for human consumption, and not for manufacturing purposes. There is a very important egg-pulp industry in South Australia, which supplies manufacturers of biscuits, and cakes, and pastrycooks in the eastern States. I believe that South Australia also exports a quantity of egg pulp to Great Britain. I assume that the Department exercises some control over imported egg pulp in order to see that it is fit for human consumption, because it is a matter of common knowledge that stale materials can sometimes be disguised in the process of manufacture.

Senator RUSSELL.—These importations are subject to rigid inspection. Only recently the Department had to inspect and condemn a large number of eggs that were being imported.

Senator PRATTEN.—Is any egg pulp imported for human consumption?

Senator RUSSELL.—Little or none.

Senator PRATTEN.—Then the risk to public health through the importation of egg pulp for human consumption is practically nil.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [3.55].—I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make the item (British) free.

That is the first of a series of amendments which I shall move in order to allow goods imported from Great Britain to enter the Commonwealth free of duty. I shall consistently and persistently follow that policy. In view of all the talk we hear about loyalty to Great Britain, and our readiness to spend millions of pounds if needs be to fight for the Old Country; it seems to me absurd to refuse to trade with it; and I shall not allow any occasion to pass without endeavouring to remove the shackles on trade which Australia is trying to impose in respect of British manufactured goods. The conditions of labour and wages in Great Britain have improved very much during the last ten years, and there is no longer that great disparity that formerly existed between the wage paid to the worker in the Old Country and that paid in Australia. I believe that the conditions will continue to improve.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Wages in Great Britain are coming down.

Senator GARDINER.—I know that big influences are at work in trying to reduce wages in Great Britain, and we shall be only assisting in that endeavour if we cripple British trade by refusing to do business with our kith and kin. The effort to reduce wages is world-wide, and we shall only be promoting it if we declare that we will make it almost impossible for Britain to send her manufactures to Australia.

Senator SENIOR.—Will not your policy increase the cost of living?

Senator GARDINER.—It will mean a reduction in the cost of living, because, if we allow British commodities to be imported free of duty, there will be so much more food and other materials available in this country at cheaper rates. As I intend to be consistent in my attitude throughout this schedule, I shall later move to assist the poultry raiser by reducing the duty on imported fowls' food. We shall be assisting in the reduction of wages in Great Britain if we refuse to transact business with the British manufacturer or impose such high Protective duties that it will not be profitable for the British manufacturer to send his goods to Australia, or for the Australian importer to purchase them. I believe that the interests of all parts of the British

Empire are linked together; yet if a body of men had sat round a table for the purpose of devising a policy to injure the financial, industrial, and trading conditions of Britain, so far as they can be injured by Australia, they could not have devised anything more effective than this Tariff.

Senator CRAWFORD. — The honorable senator is proposing to close up every Australian factory.

Senator GARDINER. — The Australian industries can stand on their own legs. We have heard the Minister (Senator Russell) tell us how excellent the Australian factory operative is. I am not afraid of any Australian industrial establishment closing down because of a reduction of duties. I am told that the item now under consideration is used in connexion with the production of leather. Will tanneries close because a commodity used in their processes of manufacture can be imported free of duty?

Senator RUSSELL.—This commodity is admitted free for tanning purposes, and yet the importations are nil.

Senator GARDINER.—That is a return to intelligence on the Government's part. In this instance they are assisting Australian industry by allowing a commodity used in a process of manufacture to be imported free of duty. I wish them to assist all our industries, and British industries also, by placing no obstacle upon trade between the Commonwealth and Great Britain, and that this Parliament shall not place any obstacles in the way of that trade. I therefore intend to move for a reduction of every duty which is proposed under the British preferential Tariff. I have not failed to notice that during the short period that I have been absent from the meetings of the Senate the Government have not made much progress with this Bill.

Request negatived.

Item agreed to.

Item 47 (Egg contents), and item 48 (Egg, not in shell, in liquid form) agreed to.

Item 49—

Egg yolk, dry, per lb., British, 1s.; intermediate, 1s.; general, 1s. 6d.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [4.2].—This item merely represents egg in another form, and in order

to stress the principle for which I have previously contended, I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make the item (British) free.

Senator SENIOR (South Australia) [4.3].—I would point out to Senator Gardiner how inconsistent is his action. Great Britain is a large importer of eggs, and not an exporter. Consequently, the honorable senator's proposal, if adopted, would merely serve to make the food of the working man in Great Britain dearer than it otherwise would be. As we have already allowed denatured eggs to be admitted free, according to the honorable senator's line of reasoning, we should offer a premium for their importation.

Request negatived.

Item agreed to.

Item 50 (Eggs, in shell) agreed to.

Item 51—

Fish, viz. :—

(F) Oysters, fresh, in the shell, per cwt., 2s.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [4.7].—Are any fresh oysters in the shell imported?

Senator KEATING.—Yes. The best oysters of the lot are imported in that form.

Senator PRATTEN.—I thought that oysters were imported in cold storage.

Senator KEATING.—Fresh oysters in the shell are imported in bags from New Zealand.

Senator PRATTEN. — No oysters, fresh in the shell, are imported from Great Britain, and yet under this item there is a duty of 2s. per cwt. against that country. A similar remark is applicable to other items. For example, there is a duty against Great Britain upon bananas which are not grown in the Old Country, and a duty upon lemons which cannot be grown there. Perhaps upon the next item I shall ask the Minister to knock out the British preferential duty upon bananas, because to some extent it exposes us to ridicule.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [4.8].—The object of the duties levied upon the various sub-items of this item is that reciprocal trade relations may be entered into between the Commonwealth and New Zealand or Canada. The latter Dominion exports a large quantity of

tinned fish to Australia, and has been practically stealing the market of Great Britain.

Item agreed to.

Item 52—

Fruits, fresh, viz. :—

(A) Bananas, per cental, British, 1s. 6d.; intermediate, 2s. 6d.; general, 2s. 6d.; and on and after 19th May, 1921, per lb., British, 1d.; intermediate, 1d.; general, 1d.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [4.9].—Until recently the duty upon bananas under the intermediate and general Tariffs was 2s. 6d. per cental. That represented an increase of 1s. per cental upon the Tariffs of 1908 and 1911. The position seems to be that until this year we were satisfied with a duty of 1s. 6d. per cental, because under the Tariff of 1914 the same rate obtained. In the present Tariff as introduced by the Government, provision was made for a duty of 2s. 6d. per cental, intermediate and general, but that duty was raised by another place to 1d. per lb., or 8s. 4d. per cental. Such an impost is much too high. While I am prepared to take into consideration the position of those who are engaged in this young industry, the prospects of its development, and the desirableness of Australia producing by white labour all the bananas it requires, I feel that there rests upon me a responsibility to support only that measure of protection which is ample. In the true interests of the consumers and the growers, I propose to move that the House of Representatives be requested to make the duty $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb., instead of 1d. per lb., or 4s. 2d. per cental.

Senator KEATING.—Why not move to make the duty 2s. 6d. per cental, as provided in the Tariff as originally introduced in another place?

Senator LYNCH.—Very well. I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make the duty, general, per cental, 2s. 6d.

My desire is that the banana growers of Australia shall prosper and multiply. I do not want to injure the industry; but we have to ask ourselves whether the duty fixed by the other branch of the Legislature is absolutely needed. I contend that it is not. It is needlessly high. If I were to consider only the interests of the State of which I am a representative, I would

move a request that the item be made free, since, for a long time to come, Western Australia, because of its peculiar climatic conditions, will not be able to produce bananas on a commercial scale. But I am not disposed to view the item solely from the stand-point of my own State. I have regard, as I have already said, to the true interests of the growers and consumers. The consumers in Western Australia will be victimized by the increased duty. Western Australia's very isolation from the banana-producing centres deprives it of the enjoyment of this very necessary article of diet.

Senator ROWELL.—Western Australia draws supplies from Java.

Senator LYNCH.—But the increased duty must entirely deprive it of those supplies. I want to put banana growers in Australia on a good working footing; but if I am asked to believe that the industry is languishing, I reply that the facts do not support that contention. As the result of the protection of 1s. 6d. per cental that it has hitherto enjoyed, the banana industry is not only in a very fair way, but is actually flourishing. The true index of its condition is to be found in a green-covered pamphlet specially issued by the advocates of a higher duty.

Senator Sir THOMAS GLASGOW.—The colour—green—is good.

Senator LYNCH.—The colour of the pamphlet is all right, and if the arguments used in it were only in keeping with the colour, I should have no more to say on the subject. As a matter of fact, however, in this pamphlet it is stated in support of the request for a higher duty that the return from 4 acres of bananas in a given district amounted to £231, or £57 per acre net. The next proposition used to support the contention for a higher duty is a statement by another gentleman engaged in the banana industry in Queensland to the effect that he worked 13 acres for a net return of £465, or £36 per acre. We owe it to ourselves to frame a Tariff that will do justice, not only to the Parliament, but to the conflicting interests involved. When I turn to the particulars given on the authority of a supporter of the increased duty in another place, I find the most encouraging position disclosed. In New South Wales and Queensland, during the period 1914-1920, when the industry was enjoy-

ing a protection of only 1s. 6d. per cental, the area under bananas increased from 8,000 acres to over 12,000 acres. In other words, there was a clear increase of 50 per cent. during this period, under a Tariff of only 1s. 6d. per cental, as against the present duty of 8s. 4d. per cental. Those who embarked upon the industry during this period, and were thus responsible for the increased area put under bananas, were not influenced by any thought as to what the future action of this Parliament might be. They had in mind only the existing duty of 1s. 6d. per cental. They were satisfied, with such a duty in operation, to invest their capital in this way, and, according to all reports, they are now thriving. In a recent issue of the *Sydney Morning Herald* it was stated that banana lands in New South Wales were sold at the extraordinarily high price of £100 per acre. It is difficult in such circumstances to believe that the banana industry is languishing. Taking into consideration all these circumstances, I hold that a duty of 1d. per lb., or 8s. 4d. per cental, is far beyond what is needed by way of protection. I, therefore, hope that the Committee will agree to my proposal.

Senator EARLE (Tasmania) [4.19].—I cannot support Senator Lynch in his effort to remove the special duty imposed on bananas by another branch of the Legislature. I recognise that a duty of 1d. per lb. amounts practically to prohibition, but I have the assurance of not only the representatives of Queensland and New South Wales in this Chamber, but people I have met outside, and particularly in Queensland, that under reasonable conditions, it is quite practicable for those States to supply at moderate price all the bananas required by Australian consumers.

Senator ROWELL.—They cannot supply Western Australia.

Senator CRAWFORD. — Western Australia can supply herself.

Senator EARLE.—I see no reason why, in certain parts of Western Australia, the banana cannot be successfully cultivated.

Senator DE LARGIE.—If the honorable senator knew Western Australia, he would be aware of reasons why the banana cannot be grown there.

Senator EARLE.—I saw figs successfully grown in the West, and the fig is a more or less tropical fruit. During a visit to Queensland I inquired why, in view of the size of the industry, there were not apparent more banana plantations; and I was informed that it is impossible for the Queensland grower, dependent on white labour, to successfully compete with the Fijian product. If local industries, primary or secondary, are to be effectively encouraged, it behoves this Parliament to afford protection against the competition of imported products which are grown with the assistance of black or other cheap labour. It is possible that buyers of bananas in Australia may be called upon to pay a certain penalty for the necessary protection while the industry is being built up; but I do not believe that any especial hardship will be felt for long. If we encourage the local production of bananas in our climatically suitable areas, there will be ample provision, within a few years, to supply the whole of Australia's requirements, and then the price will tend to become reasonable by the sheer fact of the product having to be marketed immediately upon maturing.

Senator ROWELL.—What would be the position if a similar prohibition were imposed in connexion with apple-growing?

Senator EARLE.—The apple industry is established in at least three of the States, while the banana-growing industry is in its infancy.

Senator RUSSELL.—It is a pretty healthy infant, seeing that Australia produced last year 435,000 centals, and imported only 76,000.

Senator EARLE.—One important factor is that bananas, unlike apples, cannot be locked up or stored for any length of time. They must be placed on the market when ready, and that consideration is bound to regulate the trade when this country is able to produce the whole of its own requirements.

Senator KEATING (Tasmania) [4.25].—I agree that it is desirable that this industry should be protected; but, in my view, it has been very well protected in the past. The further protection given in this schedule, as it was originally introduced in another place, was surely adequate. Replying to questions by

Senator Pratten this afternoon, the Minister (Senator Russell) furnished information of a strikingly interesting character. The particulars revealed that the importations of bananas have been steadily diminishing.

Senator CRAWFORD.—During the war.

Senator KEATING.—No! The facts are shown by the following particulars:—In 1913-14 there were imported 367,531 centals, valued at £241,137. In 1914-15 the importation totalled 274,217 centals, valued at £238,653. Those figures show a decline in the first year of the war; but, so far from the war having affected the situation in the direction indicated by Senator Crawford, the fact is that in 1915-16 the importations were 329,452 centals, valued at £256,395. In 1916-17, importations further increased to 399,452 centals, valued at £213,118. The statistics for 1917-18—the third year of the war—reveal that importations dropped from close upon 400,000 centals to 235,952, the value of which was £137,140.

Senator CRAWFORD.—When the shipping position was most acute.

Senator KEATING.—In 1918-19, after the war, importations fell by nearly one-half, namely, to 136,139 centals, valued at £89,529. For the calendar year 1920 the importations were only 76,080 centals, valued at £76,388. These particulars show that the banana-growing industry in the Commonwealth is more than holding its own. Some weeks ago members of Parliament had the privilege of seeing a cinematographic representation, in the Queen's Hall, of some of the features of the industry in Queensland and northern New South Wales. One permanent impression must have been carried away by the audience, and that had to do with the prospects of the young man as revealed in the closing scenes of the picture, when he was visualizing his motor car and the *fiancée* who was to share a very pleasant home with him on the plantation. The whole depiction suggested to my mind how successful was the industry—not under the Tariff of 8s. 4d. per cental, but under the protection which has been afforded during the past few years. The whole industry appeared to be very thriving and profitable, and the lands given up to banana-growing were obviously very valuable when it came to a question of selling out. Alto-

gether, the conditions of life were very attractive; and, in all the circumstances, I wondered that, almost immediately afterwards, members of this Parliament could have pleaded that the banana-growing industry was languishing and in need of further protection. Since the duty has been raised in another place to 8s. 4d. a cental there has been an increase in the price of bananas.

Senator REM.—That is not so.

Senator KEATING.—You will see them marked up at 1s. 6d. a dozen, and, in Sydney recently, they were being sold for more than 1s. a dozen.

Senator VARDON.—I paid 2s. a dozen the other day for bananas.

Senator KEATING.—No doubt, the further you get from Sydney and Melbourne the more the price of bananas increases. I have refused to buy bananas since their price has been increased because of the increase in the duty, but those who still buy them say that the increase in price is not justified by any improvement in their flavour or quality. I remember when, years ago, bananas could be bought for fourteen for 6d. Those were Fiji bananas, admitted duty free.

Senator CRAWFORD.—And I have seen apples sold in Melbourne for 1d. per lb., and now apples are 6d. per lb. here.

Senator KEATING.—The increase in the price of apples is not due to an increase of the import duty upon apples.

Senator CRAWFORD.—There is an import duty of 6s. per cental on apples.

Senator KEATING.—What was the previous rate? The duty on apples has not been increased as the duty on bananas has been increased. The latter has jumped from 1s. 6d. to 8s. 4d. per cental, yet we are asked to believe that this has had no effect on the retail price of bananas.

Senator DE LARGIE (Western Australia) [4.33].—I approach this question from a different angle from that from which I would approach other Tariff items. Bananas are undoubtedly an essential article of food. Perhaps, if I lived on the Pacific Coast instead of on the shores of the Indian Ocean the increasing of the duty on bananas would not seem to me quite so gross a blunder as it appears from the Western Australian point of view. Bananas cannot be

taken from Queensland to Western Australia, and the supplies for that State must come from abroad. Queensland has no part of the Western Australian banana trade, and is not likely to get it, because the shipping facilities will not permit of that.

Senator REID.—Queensland is going to make a good attempt to get it.

Senator DE LARGIE.—That State has never had it, and has no prospect of getting it. Although banana growing has made great strides in Queensland, that State has done nothing to obtain the Western Australian market for its produce. The impost under consideration is undoubtedly preventing the people of Western Australia from procuring an essential article of food, and is, therefore, a wrong one. When, with Senator Keating and others, I visited the sugar districts of Queensland some years ago—

Senator CRAWFORD.—How long ago?

Senator KEATING.—In 1905.

Senator DE LARGIE.—At that time we gave the sugar industry the greatest fillip that it had yet received. No one can say that this Commonwealth Parliament did not then deal generously with Queensland.

Senator CRAWFORD.—It has always dealt grudgingly with Queensland.

Senator DE LARGIE.—It has dealt generously with that State in regard to the sugar industry. The maintenance of the White Australia policy, of course, justifies the treatment that we have given to Queensland, and I have always looked at the sugar duties from the broad Australian standpoint. On the occasion to which I refer, we saw a great many banana plantations, but the men engaged in banana growing were not white men, but Chinamen.

Senator CRAWFORD.—There is not a Chinaman in that business to-day.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Such a sweeping assertion cannot carry weight with honorable senators.

Senator REID.—It is pretty true, anyhow.

Senator DE LARGIE.—So far as Western Australia is concerned, the present duty on bananas prevents their use there. I do not regard this matter from the fiscal stand-point, or from the White Australia stand-point; I look upon it

wholly from the stand-point of the people's need, and I say that if this impost is maintained it will be impossible for those living in Western Australia to get bananas.

Senator Sir THOMAS GLASGOW (Queensland) [4.36].—I trust that the Committee will not agree to the request. We have heard much about the way in which the banana industry has advanced, and I draw attention to the fact that the progress that has been made has been due to the protection which it has received through the lack of shipping preventing competition. In 1898, banana growing was a flourishing industry in Queensland, no fewer than 4,000,000 bunches being produced in that year; but afterwards, owing to the competition of Fiji, the Queensland production declined until, just prior to the war, it did not amount to 1,000,000 bunches per annum. To show the effect of the Fiji competition, let me contrast the cost of bringing bananas from Fiji to Melbourne with the cost of bringing bananas from Queensland to Melbourne. In 1919, the selling agents in the trade supplied the following particulars of the cost of bringing a case of bananas from Fiji to Sydney:—Transport to steamer, 1s.; freight to Sydney, 3s. 2d.; duty, 1s. 6d. per cental—say 1s. 1d. a case containing about 80 lbs. weight of fruit—wharfage dues, 1½d.; inspection fees, 2d.; Fiji export duty, ½d.; cost of case, 2s. 9d.; carting, 2d.; commission, say 1s.; the total being 9s. 5½d. When these figures were made known, the secretary to the Southern Queensland Fruit-growers Association compiled a statement of the cost of transporting a case of bananas from Gympie to Melbourne. The fruit is carried weekly by train, in what are called "fruit specials," the Fruit-growers Association having an arrangement with the Railway Commissioners of the States under which it is carried through from Gympie to Melbourne direct in about 4 days. The minimum railway rate per case from Gympie to Melbourne is 4s., the cartage to rail averages 1s. 3d., association and landing fees come to 2d., the cost of the case averages 1s. 8d., the agent's commission is 10 per cent. on 25s., or about 2s. 6d., the inspection fees at Melbourne 1d., the receiving costs at Melbourne 1d., and the carting cost at Melbourne 2d., making the

total cost 9s. 11d., or 5½d. per case more than the cost of bringing bananas from Fiji to Sydney.

Senator SENIOR.—The agents' fees are twice as high in Melbourne as in Sydney.

Senator LYNCH.—Two shillings and sixpence as against 1s.

Senator Sir THOMAS GLASGOW.—The Melbourne selling agents charge 10 per cent., whereas Fiji bananas are sold on a commission of 7½ per cent. As to the cost of production, in Fiji a native man is paid 2s. 6d. per day and a native woman 1s. 6d., whereas in Queensland the workers get from 10s. to 14s. a day, and it costs four or five times as much to grow bananas in Queensland as it costs in Fiji. In a book entitled *The Colony of Fiji*, issued some time after 1916—the exact date is not given—it is stated that the cost of producing bananas is 1s. 6d. a bunch, which would be about 4s. 6d. a case, there being three bunches in a case. It costs at least 16s. to produce a case of bananas in Queensland, allowing a reasonable return to the grower. I do not think that the Queensland growers should be asked to compete against the black labour of Fiji. During the Tariff discussion a great deal has been said in this Chamber about the interest that honorable senators take in the primary producers, and they now have a chance to show their practical sympathy by giving adequate protection to the banana industry, so that those connected with it may receive as good a return as the workers and others connected with city industries. It has been said this afternoon that the price of bananas has been increased by the duty, but in today's Melbourne *Herald* bananas are quoted at from 15s. to 20s. a case. There are about 30 dozen bananas in a case, and if honorable senators have been paying from 1s. 6d. to 2s. per dozen retail for bananas, it is not the growers who have been getting the high prices. Bananas are sold by auction without reserve, and the growers have to take whatever prices are created by the demand.

Senator RUSSELL.—Prices determined by the consumers, not by the growers?

Senator Sir THOMAS GLASGOW.—Exactly. Other fruits compete with bananas, and they cannot become very dear. Banana growing is an industry in which a good many of our returned sol-

diers have embarked, and I hope that honorable senators will give to it a measure of protection which will enable it, now that it has been re-established, to continue. In the early days banana-growing in North Queensland was principally in the hands of Chinese; but no fruit comes on to this market at all from north of Rockhampton. The Queensland fruit that comes here is grown between Rockhampton and the Tweed River. There is a considerable number of banana plantations on the northern rivers in New South Wales. I believe the production amounts to about 350,000 cases in New South Wales, and 400,000 cases in Queensland. In another place those who opposed the duty said that the industry in New South Wales was in the hands of Chinese. That is not so.

Senator GARDINER.—Very largely.

Senator RUSSELL.—I understood Senator Glasgow to say that Queensland produced more than 1,000,000 centals. The latest figures I have for the year 1918-19 are 435,000.

Senator Sir THOMAS GLASGOW.—I said the production was about 400,000 cases. If I mentioned millions previously, I was referring to the number of bunches. The Minister for Trade and Customs in another place quoted a letter which he had received, giving the number of Chinese interested and employed in the industry in New South Wales. This showed that they were very few in number. I ask honorable senators to realize that banana-growing is an Australian industry. We in Queensland feel that we are somewhat isolated in regard to primary products. We are the only State that produces tropical products, and we feel that, as the southern States are not interested in them, we do not get full consideration in the matter of tropical industries. It has been urged that the trade with Fiji will be lost owing to the fact that the boat which brought Fiji bananas here has been discontinued. Surely the trade of Queensland to the southern States is of more value than the trade of Fiji? The people of Queensland consume largely the products of the southern States, and I ask the people of the southern States, in a reciprocal spirit, to deal justly with the primary industry of banana-growing.

Senator COX (New South Wales) [4.49].—I have heard it stated here to-day that bananas are grown in the northern part of New South Wales by Chinese. I was there the other day, and found a large number of returned soldiers engaged in the industry. They have been encouraged to go on to land which is rather expensive—in fact, any land on the northern rivers is that—and it will be a great pity if we cannot help these young fellows who are endeavouring to make a living there. That district is just below the Queensland border. It is only in certain aspects that bananas can be grown, and as we have put a number of returned soldiers on to the land there to grow bananas, we have a right to protect them. We ought to leave the duty as it is.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—What about the young soldiers who have gone on to the land in Western Australia, and want to buy bananas for food?

Senator COX.—If Western Australia is the wonderful country that our honorable friends from that State make out, as part of their land is in the same latitude as northern New South Wales and Queensland, why do not their young men go up into those out-of-the-way parts and plant bananas, and see whether they will grow?

Senator DE LARGIE.—Because we have not the same climatic conditions.

Senator COX.—I have been told that bananas are being grown in Western Australia. Honorable senators from that State do not know their own country.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Scarcely any are being grown there.

Senator COX.—I do not profess to know Western Australia, and I did not bring the subject up. Our men have been game enough to pay a big price for land in northern New South Wales in order to attempt to establish the banana industry. Why do not men in Western Australia go up into the same latitudes in their State and make the experiment?

Senator DE LARGIE.—The banana cannot be grown without moisture. That is our defect in Western Australia.

Senator COX.—Is there no rain on the coast of Western Australia?

Senator DE LARGIE.—Not sufficient, and not at the right season.

Senator COX.—Then I am sorry for Western Australia. At any rate, let us produce bananas where we can. We have the land, and we have the men who are willing to go on to the land and attempt to grow bananas. I urge the Committee to help these young fellows to establish themselves.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [4.53].—I was surprised to hear Senator Cox say that Chinese are not engaged in the banana trade in the Tweed River district. Let me make myself clear on the question of Chinese. When they are allowed to come into this country I want to see them engaged in the most profitable occupation that they can engage in. I have no ill-will to any race once it has permission to associate with us. If I said that the Chinese had the monopoly of the vegetable trade in New South Wales, some one would probably indignantly deny it, on the ground that white men are growing vegetables, but the fact would remain. Their peculiar traits make the Chinese most efficient in that kind of work, and I can assure Senator Cox, not only that numbers of them are engaged in the banana trade on the Tweed River, but that in the Hay-street markets in Sydney Chinese control and handle the whole business. This is not a question of one State against another. In fact, in speaking against the duty on bananas I am speaking against my own State, because I represent the banana-growers of New South Wales as well as any one else here does.

Senator Sir THOMAS GLASGOW.—Yes, but you are a Free Trader.

Senator GARDINER.—I believe in Free Trade, but Senator Cox is also a Free Trader. I heard him say so publicly when he was returning thanks from the hustings. We were told that bananas were not going up in price, but in Queensland during the last fortnight fruiterer after fruiterer in the shops told me that the high price of bananas was due to the new Tariff. They said that the price at which bananas could be bought previously was about 8d. per dozen. The dairy farmer and grazier, and other men on the land in Queensland who are not growing bananas, those on the wheat lands of New South Wales, South Australia, and Western Australia—and these

include returned soldiers—toil, and are lucky if they get £4 an acre off their holdings. When I last spoke I quoted an auctioneer's advertisement, taken haphazard from the Tweed River daily, showing that the rental of 9 acres of banana land could be obtained for nine years for £2,000. In New South Wales there are hundreds of cases where the freehold of thousands of acres could be obtained for that money.

Senator CRAWFORD.—It might be dear at the price.

Senator GARDINER.—It is the best wheat-growing land in Australia, and will compare favorably with land in Western Australia and South Australia and other good wheat-growing areas. The thing that always amazes me about Queensland is the tremendous stretches of magnificent country.

Senator CRAWFORD. — And the small population.

Senator GARDINER.—Yes. What is the value of land in Queensland? The banana-grower is in quite a different position from the wheat-grower. The wheat-grower has to clear his land. The banana-grower chops the trees down, and while the timber is rotting in the warm moist climate the crop is growing.

Senator CRAWFORD.—It takes a lot of cultivation.

Senator GARDINER.—Not more than corn or maize.

Senator Cox.—If you had to clear a lantana patch, which is said to be the best banana land, you would know all about it.

Senator GARDINER.—Let us reason the matter out fairly. A man who grows wheat has to take every root out of his ground. Another man can grow bananas and begin to get his return almost immediately after the trees are chopped down. He can put his crop in with the hoe, and the return is enormous compared with that of any other producers in Australia. The return from banana-growing is fifty times that of any other crop, such as wheat, barley, maize, or oats. Although it may be anathema to be a Free Trader, I do not think that any member of the Senate is sufficiently stupid to want to destroy the trade between Australia and Fiji. The ships from Fiji, which bring us their bananas, take back at least three

times the value of Australian products in return.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—It is the same with the Western Australian trade with Java.

Senator GARDINER.—Exactly the same thing applies there. We can sell our products to Fiji in small quantities in regular weekly or monthly shipments, because in that warm climate things will not keep. Flour, for instance, becomes mouldy in a few months. The people of Fiji are therefore continually buying goods from Australia. The Minister says that the Fiji banana trade with Australia runs to a little over £200,000 a year, and I estimate that Fiji takes from us goods to the value of £600,000 a year. Are we going to let that trade go down the coast of New Zealand, and lose it, because we have put a prohibitive duty on an article which our people want? I say to the Queensland and Tweed River banana-growers: "You can put a high price on your bananas, but you will lose your trade, because as soon as bananas reach a price beyond the purchasing power of the boy in the street, they will cease to be bought." Coming along Bourke-street I saw bananas in the shop windows marked at 9 for 1s., and 10 for 1s. They were just the same class of bananas as I have seen sold in the streets of Sydney at 24 for 6d. That is one of the effects of the increased duty. I have shown the annual turnover of our trade with Fiji. Fiji is a part of the Empire, and its bananas come in earlier than those of Queensland or the Tweed River. The Fiji banana trade does not interfere with the Australian growers. The best Fiji banana trade is over before the Queensland trade starts. I believe that 2s. 6d. is a considerable Protective duty, but I am willing to compromise with my principles by offering to be reasonable in this matter, seeing that the Senate is Protectionist, and that the Government which introduced the Bill is Protectionist also. The Protectionist Minister who introduced this, the most drastic Protective Tariff ever imposed in Australia, placed a high Protective duty on bananas, and he represents the banana-growing districts of New South Wales. Why should we make the duty prohibitive? Why cut into our Fijian trade? Why

not impose a reasonable rate of duty which will not injure the Australian banana-growing industry, but which will allow it to prosper as it has been prospering in the past? Senator Cox almost gave the show away when he talked about the high price asked for land in the banana districts, where the soldiers are settled. It is well known that those lands are high in price.

Senator DUNCAN.—Up to £200 an acre.

Senator GARDINER.—Yes. What is wheat-growing land sold at?

Senator LYNCH.—It is thrown at one in many places.

Senator GARDINER.—Exactly. Most of the land in New South Wales that is suitable for wheat-growing is freehold, and it can be obtained at a few pounds per acre; but banana land on the Tweed River, which consists of rough land which a man accustomed to the usual open country would not think of working, is sold at fabulous prices. If one were to approach an auctioneer who had ordinary banana land for sale, he would find that he was asking at least £50 per acre, and that land more suitable for the production of bananas would be worth from £100 to £200 per acre, which shows that the industry is a fairly profitable one, and does not need undue protection. As I consider bananas a portion of our food supply, I trust the members of the Committee will exercise a wise discretion when they have to decide whether this necessary fruit shall be made more costly than it was a few months ago.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [5.2].—I desire to correct an impression which may have been conveyed to honorable senators by the statement that the wages paid in Fiji are exceptionally low. A banana-grower in Fiji informed me that the Indian coolies employed there are paid £1 per week, and supplied with a certain area of land, and, therefore, the cry of cheap labour in Fiji loses much of its effect. As there has been a considerable increase in wages, the degree of protection has also increased. Senator Glasgow quoted the cost of conveying bananas from Fiji to Melbourne, and from Gympie to Melbourne, and showed that there was a difference of 5½d. in favour of Fiji. The honorable senator said that it cost 4s. to convey a case of bananas by rail

from Gympie to Melbourne, but it must be remembered that there are ports on the Queensland coast from which there is a splendid steamer service to the southern ports, and there is, therefore, no need for growers to incur the expenditure of 4s. per case when a cheaper method of transit is available.

Senator Sir THOMAS GLASGOW.—The fruit comes to this market by rail.

Senator LYNCH.—There is no necessity for growers to utilize the more expensive route when there is an alternative and cheaper one by water. The honorable senator also stated that a commission of 2s. 6d. was charged, but, as mentioned by Senator Senior, Fiji bananas are sold on a commission of 1s., and that discrepancy needs some explanation. We also find on examining the position that a case does not weigh a cental; but, as mentioned by the honorable member for Lilley (Mr. Mackay), it is equal to only two-thirds of a cental. Senator Glasgow, on his own showing, has proved that it costs 1s. 6d. more to sell a case of Queensland bananas than a similar quantity of Fiji bananas, and I would like to know why the Queensland growers do not go to the men who are prepared to dispose of them on a commission of 1s. It was mentioned in another place that a case of bananas weighs two-thirds of a cental, so that while there is a difference of 1s. 6d. as additional commission, and only two-thirds of a cental in a case, on a whole cental there is an extra charge of 2s. for selling the product of the Queensland grower as against that of the Fijian producer. If the Fijian producer can dispose of his product under the conditions mentioned, it is clear that there is a fair amount of padding and bulging in the figures submitted; and, instead of showing a disadvantage of 5½d. in the case of the Queensland growers, they can go to those who dispose of the Fijian product and save 2s. per cental. If that saving is added to the old duty, there is a clear protection of 5s. per cental.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [5.7].—I do not know if there is any item in the Tariff which is likely to place me in a more difficult position than the one we are now discussing. Personally, I am in entire sympathy with Queensland senators in their desire to retain the duty

appearing in the schedule; but New South Wales is also interested in banana-growing, and I can claim to have among my constituents quite a number of growers. In another place it was shown, in support of the argument to impose a duty of 1d. per lb. on bananas, that the industry had not increased very much. Certainly it had not increased in Queensland in 1920, as compared with 1914, on the figures given, but in New South Wales the area has increased from 255 acres in 1914, to 2,853 acres in 1920, which is equal to nearly one-third of the total area under bananas in Queensland.

Senator BOLTON.—And under the old Tariff.

Senator PRATTEN.—I shall deal with that point later. As a senator representing New South Wales, where we have about one-third of the area that Queensland has under bananas, I must endeavour to give a fair deal to all concerned. So far as my knowledge goes, banana-growing is about the easiest work in which a producer on the land can engage; and if we compare the duty which the Queensland senators wish to sustain—

Senator CRAWFORD.—The New South Wales senators want it too.

Senator PRATTEN.—I am speaking for New South Wales. If we compare the duty of 1d. per lb. on bananas with that on citrus fruits, it would appear that a duty of 3d. on lemons is only reasonable, as there is no comparison whatever in connexion with the labour required in growing bananas and that necessary in producing lemons. I cannot support the request moved by Senator Lynch, because I believe that all the evidence suggests that bananas will not be imported into Australia in large quantities if the present duty is reduced by one-half, and I intend to move in that direction if the request before the Committee is not carried. We have been supplied with a lot of data in connexion with the production and importation of bananas. The Vice-President of the Executive Council (Senator Russell) and Senator Keating have quoted figures, which, in my opinion, prove that the industry in Australia has not been damaged in consequence of importations from Fiji, because they have diminished during re-

cent years. When the Minister was submitting the figures in answer to a question, I was able to gather that the production in Australia in 1918-19 was 425,000 centals, and the importations from Fiji in that year represented 52,709 centals. As all the figures quoted by the Minister are not before me, I cannot say what the production in Australia in 1919-20 was; but the importations from Fiji in that year represent only 32,000 centals. In a constituency with over 1,000,000 electors, I have to consider not only the special interests, but the interests of the community as a whole. The *Melbourne Journal of Commerce* of 27th July, 1921, shows that the importations of bananas in 1918-19 were approximately 62,000 centals, and in 1919-20 approximately 32,000 centals. Those figures may apply to Melbourne only.

Senator RUSSELL.—The importations in 1919-20 were 76,080 centals, and in 1920-21, 136,000 centals.

Senator PRATTEN.—My figures must then apply to Melbourne only. According to the Minister's figures, the importations average about only 25 per cent. of the production within Australia. We have to realize the incidence of what we are doing, and to remember that bananas are eaten by all children.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—That is what used to be done.

Senator PRATTEN.—I would like to remind my friends from Queensland that the settlement of returned soldiers on land for banana growing took place while the duty was even below the so-called low duty that appeared in the Tariff schedule when it was first introduced in another place. I know that several Chinese firms are largely interested in banana growing on the Tweed River, in New South Wales. I agree with Senator Gardiner that once the Chinese are here they have an equal right with any one else to make a reasonable profit, and to be unrestricted in their business deals; but on the authority of Mr. S. J. Plain, who writes on behalf of the Fiji growers, and is one himself, On Lee and Co., Won Lee and Co., Tim Young and Co., Tiy Sang and Co., and Sang On Tiy and Co., have taken up large tracts of country in Southern Queensland and the Tweed River district, and are growing bananas.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Chinese growers in Queensland are restricted to 5 acres each.

Senator PRATTEN.—Mr. Plain says that Tiy Sang and Co. were for years engaged in the Fiji banana industry, but have now given it up entirely, and that Sang On Tiy and Co., who were also Fijian banana growers, have now only a very small area left, finding their Australian investments more profitable. Mr. Plain goes on to make certain statements, which indorse those made in this Chamber by several honorable senators this afternoon, in reference to the extraordinarily high prices that are asked by land-owners for land suitable for banana growing. He points out that land which only a few years ago could be bought for £20 per acre for dairying purposes is now bringing from £70 to £100 per acre for banana growing, and that some of it is realizing as much as £150 per acre. On the authority of the *Sydney Morning Herald* of the 8th August, 1919, before this very high duty was imposed, the sale was reported of 64 acres of banana land for £6,450, or a little over £100 per acre for virgin land. The Murwillumbah correspondent of the *Sydney Mail*, writing on 20th April, 1919, gave the local value of a banana farm in bearing at £180 per acre. These figures adequately support those given in the Senate to-day with regard to the extraordinarily high values that land-owners are reaping in connexion with banana growing. Where, then, is our justification for increasing a duty that will affect millions of consumers in Australia, and often take away from them what is certainly a hygienic and necessary food, particularly for the young?

Senator Cox.—Does the honorable senator realize that this land only lasts for banana-growing purposes for ten or fifteen years?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—That emphasizes the honorable senator's argument.

Senator PRATTEN.—Of course it does. If £200 per acre can be profitably paid for land which only lasts for ten years, what in the world is the use of this Senate imposing a high duty on imported bananas? I emphasize the point that when a number of our returned soldiers commenced growing bananas they did so when the duty was certainly less

than a third of what is now proposed. I would ask this Senate to consider some other aspects of Australian trade in addition to banana growing, particularly trade with Fiji.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—The honorable senator's time has expired.

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [5.22].—Senator Pratten has compared the labour required in the production of bananas with that required in the production of citrus fruits, but he overstated his case when he claimed that if bananas needed a protective duty of 1d. per lb. lemons would require in proportion a duty of at least 3d. per lb. Banana-growing, being a tropical or sub-tropical industry, is in competition with cheap labour countries. That cannot be said of citrus fruit-growing.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—Lemons grow wild in New Guinea and in all the islands of the Pacific.

Senator CRAWFORD.—The wild lemon would have no sale in the markets of Australia. The Lisbon lemon, the lemon of commerce, does not grow wild in Queensland or anywhere else. It can only be propagated by grafting. I urge the Senate not to come to a hasty conclusion upon this question. There has been considerable agitation for a reduction in the increased duty placed upon bananas by another branch of this Legislature, founded on the assumption that the increase would mean higher prices for bananas, but any one who has given attention to the matter must have noticed that the price has not increased during recent weeks.

Senator GARDINER.—Will the honorable senator go down the street with me now and test that contention?

Senator CRAWFORD.—I do not know that it would prove my case or that of Senator Gardiner unless we could ascertain exactly the price which was paid for bananas immediately before the increased duty was imposed. In the past, when there were considerable importations from Fiji, regular weekly shipments were made from Queensland, but about once a month a boat would arrive from Fiji with a big shipment, and for a few days the banana market was in a very depressed condition. The wholesale price fell considerably, but

the retail price remained the same. The question at issue to-day is of considerable importance to Queensland, a State with an area of 670,000 square miles, but with fewer people in it than are to be found in Sydney or Melbourne. As a consequence of its sparse population, and because its capital city is so small in comparison with either Melbourne or Sydney, it is impossible for Queensland to compete, in respect to a great many of the secondary industries, with the manufacturers of the large cities of the south, who have wide markets right at their doors; and if Queensland is to receive its share of the advantages of a Protective policy special consideration must be given to its primary industries. Looking at the Tariff as introduced, we find that the very opposite is the case. It provided higher duties on the products of the temperate parts of Australia than it did for the products of the tropical part, overlooking the fact that the latter had to face the competition of cheap-labour countries, while the former were merely in competition with countries where the conditions of labour and wages were approximately similar to those existing in the Commonwealth. Let us take as an example the duty upon apples, which is 6s. per cental. That is not only 3s. 6d. per cental more than Senator Lynch proposes as the duty on bananas, but quite recently there was an absolute embargo upon the importation of apples, its purpose being to find a market within Australia for as many apples as the people of Australia could possibly consume. Again, a little while ago, when a Tasmanian industry, the production of carbide, was threatened, an embargo was placed upon importations from abroad, and I do not think it has been removed. Why should this consideration be given to the industries of the south, while such scant consideration is given to the industries of the north? We hear a lot about the White Australia policy, and the necessity for keeping the race pure. I believe in that policy. Whilst I believe in excluding certain races from this country, I also believe in excluding the products of the labour of those races. It has been stated that there are many Chinese engaged in the production of bananas in Queensland. I know that that is not the case, though

Senator Crawford.

there may here and there be an odd Chinaman engaged in the industry. I am wondering whether, when we come to that section of the Tariff dealing with furniture, there will be a strong move made to reduce the present protection afforded to that industry by 50 or 75 per cent., because nearly the whole of the furniture manufactured in Melbourne is made by Chinese. I doubt it.

Senator PRATTEN. — It is not so in Sydney.

Senator CRAWFORD. — It is so, in Melbourne.

Senator Cox. — A great deal of furniture is made in Sydney by Chinese.

Senator GARDINER. — The Chinese cabinetmaker is a better unionist than the other fellow. Machinery makes most of our furniture, and the Chinese do not use it.

Senator CRAWFORD. — Honorable senators from Western Australia complain that the duty on bananas will have a very special effect in their State because of its distance from those portions of the Commonwealth in which bananas are grown. There are portions of Western Australia of about the same latitude and having similar climatic conditions to those prevailing in the banana districts of New South Wales and Queensland.

Senator DE LARGIE. — The honorable senator shows that he does not know anything about Western Australia when he talks like that.

Senator CRAWFORD. — According to the official *Year-Book*, bananas are grown in Western Australia at the present time, and if so, it seems reasonable to assume that they can be grown there in such quantities as are needed to supply the Western Australian demand for the fruit.

Senator DE LARGIE. — Grapes are grown in England.

Senator CRAWFORD. — I know that, and bananas are also grown in England. Senator de Largie does not, I am sure, mean to suggest that bananas can be grown in Western Australia only under the same hot-house conditions as those in which grapes and other tropical fruits are grown in England. I feel that members of this National Parliament are not in this matter taking that broad Australian outlook which they should take.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN. — The broad Queensland outlook.

Senator CRAWFORD.—The Queensland outlook with regard to products of the south is not a narrow one. Queenslanders are not geographical Protectionists. They believe in a Tariff which will give the industries of Australia a fair show, irrespective of the part of the Commonwealth in which they are carried on. Unfortunately, there seems to be a very clear distinction drawn by some honorable senators between industries of the north and those of the south. The reason, no doubt, is that the population of the Commonwealth is at present to be found chiefly in the temperate latitudes. It will not always be so. The day will come, no matter what injustice may be done to the northern half of Australia in the meantime, when Queensland, owing to its population and production, will be the dominant partner in the Commonwealth.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—Not so long as £200 per acre is charged for land there.

Senator CRAWFORD.—As regards land values, I cannot speak of prices in New South Wales, but I have never heard of unimproved land in Queensland, for any purpose whatever, bringing more than £30 per acre. That land is equal to the very best in Australia. If it were situated at Bacchus Marsh, on the Snowy River, or on the Derwent in Tasmania, it would probably bring from £100 to £200 per acre.

Senator LYNCH.—Unimproved land?

Senator CRAWFORD.—Yes. In Tasmania, hops could be grown on that land, and they are protected to the extent of 1s. per lb. Something was said about the trade which Australia was previously doing with Fiji. We know that the steamer *Levuka*, which hitherto has been trading between the Commonwealth and Fiji, was taken off that run and put into the Australian coastal trade, but let me inform honorable senators that the shipping company concerned announced its intention of doing that twelve months ago. It announced that the *Levuka* was to be transferred to the Australian coastal trade, and the *Suva* was to take up the running between Australia and Fiji. Surely the trade between our own States is of as much value as trade between Australia and some outside country?

There is not a ship that comes down here with produce from Queensland that does not go back laden with the manufactures and products of the South.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—The honorable senator's time has expired.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN (Western Australia) [5.37].—I wish to reply to a few of the assertions made by Senator Crawford and others. During the course of this debate, honorable senators must have been struck by the extreme modesty of senators coming from Queensland.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Why remark upon the obvious?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—Perhaps it has been so obvious as not to require remark. So successful have the representatives of Queensland been in their last effort at brigandage, shall I call it, that perhaps they have been encouraged to make another effort in the same direction. Australia, with extreme generosity in granting assistance to the sugar industry of Queensland, has made the people engaged in that industry a present of some £23,000,000. That is a fair sum of money. One section of the Queensland people has succeeded in extracting this sum of money from the pockets of the rest of the people of Australia, and, encouraged by that success, other sections of the people of Queensland are now attempting another feat of the same sort.

Senator Sir THOMAS GLASGOW.—They could not get a railway across a desert.

Senator CRAWFORD.—The Commonwealth is losing £500,000 a year on the transcontinental railway.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I was not a party to assisting the Queensland sugar-growers to get this money out of the people of Western Australia, and I am not going to be a party to enable Queensland banana-growers, who are already adequately protected, to extract more money out of the pockets of the people of the State I represent.

Senator DE LARGIE.—We got the transcontinental railway in spite of the votes of Queensland representatives.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—That is so, but I am not at present discussing the merits of the transcontinental railway.

Senator CRAWFORD.—That is something that the honorable senator would rather not discuss.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I am now discussing the demerits of a proposal to impose a duty of 8s. 4d. per cental on bananas. I want to analyze the extraordinary modesty of senators from Queensland. In the face of the figures we have received from Senator Gardiner, from the Vice-President of the Executive Council (Senator Russell), and other honorable senators, they ask for an extraordinarily high protection on this article, which amounts to prohibition.

Senator RUSSELL.—I am not responsible for this duty.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I know that the Minister does not in the least agree with the duty in its present form. No reasonable man could, unless he were prejudiced by an extraordinary position and an extraordinary past success in a similar venture as honorable senators from Queensland are.

Senator CRAWFORD.—I do not think that Senator Drake-Brockman should make such a personal matter of this.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I have said that honorable senators from Queensland are very modest people, and I am analyzing their modesty. Senator Crawford drew a picture to indicate how badly the people of the north had been treated as compared with the people of the south. He may have a grouse on this subject.

Senator DUNCAN.—However badly we treated them, they were never treated half so badly as by their own Government.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—That is perfectly true. Surely the people of the west have some claim to consideration as well as the people of the north. Senator Crawford tells us that Inter-State trade is just as valuable as trade between Australia and other parts of the world. That may be perfectly true. What trade goes on between Queensland and Western Australia? Very little. So far as bananas are concerned, Western Australia secures her supplies, not from Queensland, but from Java, and in exchange sends to Java grapes, apples, and other products. I am informed from the best sources of authority in Western Australia that if this duty on bananas is continued, the trade now established between

Western Australia and Java, and which is becoming every day a more valuable trade, will receive a very severe knock. Is it the desire of honorable senators to inflict upon Western Australia, which I heard one honorable senator describe as the "Cinderella of the Commonwealth," a severe knock in this direction? Surely that State suffers sufficiently from being a member of the Federation!

Senator CRAWFORD.—Would the honorable senator tell us how many ships come down laden with bananas from Java to Western Australia?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—There is a regular trade in bananas between Java and Western Australia. Moreover, it is a growing trade. We have been trying to open up trade with Java in meat, wheat, flour, and such fruits as apples and grapes particularly. As the result of recent endeavours, the trade between Western Australia and Java is a growing trade, and we take in exchange bananas from Java. No ships will be found ready to take our products to Java if they have to return empty from that country. Senator Pratten mentioned that it used to be a common thing to see children about the streets of our capital cities eating bananas.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Why is it not a common thing now, seeing that the price of bananas has not increased?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—If the present duty on bananas is continued, it will be a most uncommon thing to see any bananas in Western Australia at all.

Senator DE LARGIE.—It means prohibition.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—It does. We have been told that bananas in Melbourne are not more expensive than they were before the increased duty was imposed. Possibly there has been no increase in the wholesale price. I understand that the reason is that there is a "ring" controlling bananas, and that as soon as this duty is passed by the Senate the price will be increased.

Senator SIR THOMAS GLASGOW.—How can that be so, when the bananas are sold at auction, and without reserve?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I am not concerned with what is happening in Melbourne; but I know that the price of bananas in Perth has risen 100 per cent. already as a result of the increased

duty. Under normal conditions Western Australia does not get bananas from Queensland, but from Java. If the present duty is increased the Java supply will be cut off, and the people of Western Australia will have to pay immense prices for bananas or go without them. I appeal to the Committee to support the amendment proposed by Senator Lynch, who displayed a true modesty—not the modesty displayed this afternoon by Queensland senators—when he merely asked that the duty should be made 2s. 6d. Why it should have been increased from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. I do not know. The wonderful prosperity enjoyed by the Queensland growers under the duty of 1s. 6d. does not justify any increase at all. We have been told that virgin land cut up for banana-growing was sold for from £50 to £200 an acre.

Senator CRAWFORD. — The statement that virgin land for banana-growing was sold for £200 is quite incorrect. No banana land was ever sold at that price.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN. — I shall not argue the question with the honorable senator; but we have been given definite facts this afternoon concerning the prices at which virgin land has been sold for banana-growing. Senator Crawford has suggested that bananas might be grown in Western Australia, which has a sub-tropical climate. Some years ago the Western Australian Government appointed Mr. Despeissis Commissioner for Tropical Agriculture, and he carried out a great number of experiments, some of which were very successful. He proved the possibility of growing cotton and tobacco, but his attempts to grow bananas, I am informed, were a failure.

Senator Sir THOMAS GLASGOW. — What have been the developments in connexion with the cultivation of cotton and tobacco?

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN. — Those products are not grown in Western Australia because of the lack of labour; and we cannot grow bananas because the rainfall is too light and the land is unsuitable. That is my answer to Senator Crawford's statement that Western Australia is at fault in not growing its own bananas.

Senator LYNCH. — We might as well ask why Queensland does not grow its own wheat.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [5.51]. — I rise to complete my remarks that were interrupted by a standing order that, in my opinion, should be suspended.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap). — The honorable senator must not discuss the Standing Orders at this stage. There is a proper method of doing that.

Senator PRATTEN. — As the standing order came down on me like a guillotine in the midst of my speech, I shall appeal to Ministers to-morrow to suspend or amend it, in order to allow a senator to extend to half-an-hour his first speech on an important item. Already I have seen Senators Lynch, Guthrie, and Crawford interfered with three times by this standing order in the course of one speech.

I do not argue that the banana industry of Queensland until now has been in a very flourishing condition. It has more than held its own, and there have been very rapid developments in banana growing in the valley of the River Tweed, in New South Wales. The area under crop increased from practically nothing to nearly 3,000 acres in 1920 under the old duty. Although I am a representative of that district, as part of New South Wales, and will be responsible to the growers for my actions in the Senate, I fail to see that the extraordinarily high duty on bananas is required by them. We have received no representations whatever from the Tweed growers who have selected that 3,000 acres.

Senator REM. — They belong to the same organization as do the Queensland banana-growers, and they work together.

Senator PRATTEN. — If they ignore their representatives in the Senate they must take the risk. I have received no representations at all from any of the growers, who, according to statistics given in another place in support of the increased duty, are cultivating 3,000 acres for the production of bananas. I give notice that I shall move an amendment to Senator Lynch's request in order to reduce the duty by 50 per cent.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap). — The procedure adopted in connexion with former Tariffs, and vouchsafed to the Committee by Senator Byzacott, as Acting Chairman, is that in regard to increases the highest request shall be taken

first, and in regard to reduction the lowest must be taken first. To accept an amendment upon a motion for a request would unnecessarily complicate the procedure; but if Senator Lynch's motion for a request is negatived, Senator Pratten may then move a further request.

Senator PRATTEN.—I shall act upon your suggestion, sir. I take this course out of sympathy with the appeals of honorable senators from Queensland that we should give adequate protection to tropical industries. In my opinion, the duty I shall propose will be absolutely sufficient for the industry in any and every direction. It will safeguard to a great extent the consumers; although it will be a high duty, it will not be prohibitive, and I think it is the limit to which my friends from Queensland can reasonably ask the Committee to go, having regard to the fact that it will be an increase of nearly three times the British preferential duty that was in operation prior to the 19th May, 1921, and nearly twice that which was in operation against bananas from Fiji, Java, or elsewhere under the old Tariff. One of the strongest arguments against allowing the duty imposed in another place to remain is that the whole of the extensive development in the industry, the increase in the prices paid for banana lands, and the big crops taken from those lands, occurred before the high Tariff was imposed in May last.

Senator BOLTON. — Why increase the duty at all?

Senator PRATTEN.—The appeals made to me by my brethren from Queensland to treat tropical industries in a liberal, if not handsome, way, have had some effect, but there is no evidence that banana-growing in Australia will not be a highly lucrative industry even with the lower duty I shall propose.

Senator PAYNE (Tasmania) [5.58].—I wish to regard this question from a purely Australian point of view, and I regret that there has been introduced into the discussion a suggestion of conflict between the interests of north and south. Such a feeling should be absent from the discussion, because the majority of honorable senators are prepared to deal with this question fairly, and recognise that any suggestion in the interests of any primary industry must benefit the whole Commonwealth, whilst the failure of the

banana-growing industry would be prejudicial to the interests of the whole Commonwealth. I have been anxious to come to a conclusion as to whether we can fairly impose upon the consumers of bananas the heavier burden which will be inevitable if the duty in the schedule is continued, or whether, on the other hand, it is reasonable to reduce the duty, having regard to the interests of those engaged in the industry. Some of the speakers have clearly shown that the industry, which has been established for some years, has been regarded as highly profitable, especially during the last few years, even under the old Tariff. Other speakers have pointed out the handicap imposed upon Queensland growers by the enormous cost of transporting their product to the large centres of population in Australia. I should like the point to be made clear whether it is essential that bananas grown at Gympie should be railed to Melbourne. Why was the carriage of bananas by rail introduced in the first instance? Is it not a fact that the railways had to be used for the transport of this fruit because of the scarcity of shipping a few years ago? Is that the only reason why bananas are carried by rail instead of being carried by sea?

Senator CRAWFORD.—When they are transported by rail they reach our large centres of population in half the time that they would otherwise occupy.

Senator REID.—Railway carriage was adopted to enable all the fruit to be landed in a fresh condition.

Senator PAYNE.—But if bananas from Fiji can be landed in our chief ports in good condition, why cannot bananas from Queensland?

Senator REID.—A boat specially fitted for the carriage of bananas has been running regularly to Fiji. We have no such vessel upon our coast.

Senator PAYNE.—I regret that Senator Crawford did not enlighten us upon this point, because the charges made by agents for the handling of bananas in cases seem to be out of all proportion to the value of the services rendered. Sea carriage is the natural method of transportation for fruit of this description. But the growers have adopted the most expensive form of carriage possible.

Senator REID.—Does not the honorable senator think that the grower knows his own business?

Senator PAYNE.—But we are being asked to give him a much heavier protection than he has hitherto enjoyed to enable him to continue sending his bananas by rail to the chief centres of Australia. Senator Glasgow has told us that a commission of 2s. 6d. per case is charged by agents for disposing of this fruit. That is equivalent to about 17½ per cent. upon the prices quoted by the honorable senator, namely, 15s. to 20s. per case. It has been said that returned soldiers are engaged in the industry of banana growing. I am glad that that is so. But we cannot get away from the fact that they were induced to take up banana-growing upon figures which were available to them prior to the imposition of such a heavy duty. Yet we know upon good authority that the industry was previously a lucrative one.

If the present duty be continued, I wish specially to stress the possibility of Australia losing her trade with Fiji. We must always recognise that we are dependent upon other countries for our prosperity. I have been assured upon the very best authority that many Australians are engaged in banana-growing in Fiji. These men invested their capital there, knowing that they could command a fair market for their produce in the Commonwealth, and in return for that market they have been drawing their supplies from us. In 1918-19 I learn that the total imports into the Commonwealth from Fiji were valued at £192,921, and during the same year our exports to those islands were valued at £443,981.

Senator CRAWFORD.—How much of that amount is represented by re-exports?

Senator PAYNE.—We cannot hope to impose a prohibitive duty upon the products of any country without provoking retaliation. I do not wish to see our trade with Fiji diverted to New Zealand, as it inevitably will be if we do anything to prevent the Fijian banana planters disposing of their produce in Australia. At the same time, I have no desire to place the industry in Fiji upon the same basis as the industry in the Commonwealth. We ought, however, to give Fijian bananas a reasonable amount of encour-

agement. Senator Lynch has moved that the other place be requested to reduce the duty upon bananas to 2s. 6d. per cental, and I understand that Senator Pratten intends to submit a request in favour of reducing the duty to ½d. per lb. Your remarks, sir, in regard to the procedure to be adopted in dealing with these requests have placed honorable senators in a quandary. Some of us may desire to give the Queensland grower a protection of ½d. per lb. But if Senator Lynch's proposal, which must be put to the Committee first, be carried, we shall be afforded no opportunity of voting upon the proposal which has been outlined by Senator Pratten. I would, therefore, suggest that Senator Lynch should withdraw his motion until the proposal foreshadowed by Senator Pratten has been dealt with.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—It has been correctly laid down by Senator Buzacott that the procedure adopted in connexion with former Tariffs has been that where reductions of a duty are sought the lowest duty should first be put to the vote, and that where increases are requested the highest increase proposed should be dealt with first. If the Committee rejects Senator Lynch's motion, Senator Pratten's proposal may then be put. But if Senator Lynch's motion be carried, the honorable senator must see that that action will express the will of a majority of the Committee.

Senator PAYNE.—There may be a number of honorable senators who are strongly opposed to the present duty of 1d. per lb. upon bananas but who are not prepared to go as far as Senator Lynch. Under the procedure which has been outlined, these honorable senators will be entirely debarred from voting in favour of any reduction of the duty.

The CHAIRMAN.—Their attitude must be quite clear to themselves. They may act as they think fit in regard to Senator Lynch's proposal. If that be not carried, any further proposal will be considered.

Senator PAYNE.—If any Queensland senator should contribute further to this discussion, I should like him to make clear to the Committee why it is necessary to continue the present method

of railing bananas from Gympie to Melbourne. If there be no possibility of marketing the fruit by means of sea-carriage, consideration, of course, must be given to that fact. But up to the present time nobody has intimated whether a cheaper method of transportation cannot be adopted. Upon the figures which have been submitted to us to-day, it costs more to market in Sydney a case of bananas from Gympie than it does to forward a case of bananas from Levuka to Sydney or Melbourne.

Senator CRAWFORD.—What are the respective distances?

Senator PAYNE.—The cost of sending bananas from Gympie to Melbourne ought to be infinitely less than the cost of transporting bananas from Fiji to Melbourne, as the distance in the former case is so much shorter. In dealing with this matter, we must consider the cost of marketing the article which is required for consumption. If we have no reliable figures in that connexion, we cannot arrive at an accurate conclusion.

Senator REID (Queensland) [6.13].—I ask honorable senators to recognise that the banana industry has now entered upon quite a new phase in its development. Hitherto bananas have been grown in Queensland, chiefly by Chinese. It is only during recent years that the industry has got into the hands of white men. A good deal has been said this afternoon about the way in which the industry has been developed without the aid of a Tariff. But I would point out that it developed to its present proportions with the aid of white labour only within the war period. The rush which took place in Queensland and upon the Tweed River for land which is suitable for banana cultivation occurred solely during the war period. That rush was entirely due to the fact that during that period Fijian bananas were shut out of Australia, so that our own market was open to the local growers. The result was that the price of bananas rose to such an extent that many persons embarked upon the industry.

Senator KEATING.—Statistics show that the importation of bananas decreased during the war period.

Senator REID.—They do not. Those persons who took up land in Queensland and upon the Tweed River for the

purpose of engaging in the industry did so because the price of bananas was so high that it paid them to do so. The industry is, therefore, a new one, so far as the employment of white labour is concerned. The prices that have been ruling for bananas have been largely responsible for the growth of the industry. The statement has been made that up to £200 per acre has been paid for banana lands on the Tweed River. I do not know of any virgin country for which that price has been obtained; but it might have been paid for plantations in full bearing. My own view is that many of those who have recently taken up banana land at the high prices which, owing to the keen demand, have been ruling, will "burn their fingers" over it. I told many of them so when I was in the Tweed River district some time ago, and I am sure that they will regret having paid such exceedingly high rates. They were induced to buy because the market rates for bananas were so high in consequence of the war having interfered with the shipping trade between Australia and Fiji that they believed that, despite the high land values, they would be able to make a good living. If the Tariff is reduced, however, many of them will have to go out of the industry. They will lose the money they have invested in it, and much Commonwealth money that has been expended in establishing returned soldiers on banana lands will also be lost.

Senator PRATTEN.—But those high land values prevailed before this duty was put on.

Senator REID.—Quite so. The fact that vessels during the war were taken off the Fiji trade made such a demand for the locally-grown bananas that people were induced to pay high prices for banana country, and unless this duty is continued they will find themselves in serious difficulties. I accompanied two deputations representing banana-growers, including returned soldiers, on the Tweed River, as well as in Southern Queensland, that waited on the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene), and the Assistant Minister for Repatriation (Mr. Rodgers), and asked for an increased duty, pointing out that, having regard to the price of labour and the high land

values, it was necessary that they should have more protection. The members of the deputation were closely cross-questioned by the Minister for Trade and Customs, and there can be no doubt that they put up an excellent case for the increased duty which was passed by another place.

Senator PAYNE has asked why bananas are brought by rail instead of by sea from Queensland to Sydney and Melbourne markets. The answer is that the growers found that the exposure of the fruit on the decks of steamers led to great deterioration and wastage, and that there were so many delays in connexion with the shipping services that it was highly desirable to arrange for special fruit trains. With this object in view, the banana growers of Southern Queensland and the Tweed River, New South Wales, formed themselves into an association, and guaranteed to the Railways Commissioners of Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria a certain weekly tonnage of fruit for the Sydney and Melbourne markets, with the result that weekly fruit trains were arranged. This special service has benefited not merely the growers, but the consumers, who are thus able to obtain their fruit fresher and in much better condition than was possible under the old system.

Senator DUNCAN.—Fiji bananas are at a disadvantage to that extent.

Senator REID.—I shall deal with that point presently; but I desire, first of all, to meet the case put up by honorable senators from Western Australia that this duty deprives consumers in that State of a supply of bananas. As a matter of fact, the Southern Queensland Fruit-growers Association is now negotiating with the Commonwealth Commissioner for Railways and the Railways Commissioners of Western Australia for a fruit train which, after making deliveries in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, will go right through to the capital of the western State. Arrangements have already been completed for a fruit train running through to Adelaide, and it is hoped that it will shortly go right through to Perth. The people of Western Australia will then be able to obtain all the bananas they require.

Senator GARDINER.—Will Queensland in return take supplies of grapes, apples, and figs from Western Australia?

Senator REID.—The Fruitgrowers Association has been endeavouring to arrange for an exchange of fruit between the various States.

Senator GARDINER.—But Queensland can grow every fruit.

Senator REID.—I do not know any fruit that Queensland cannot grow; but when certain fruits are out of season in that State there is no reason why it should not be able to obtain them from other States. If this duty be reduced, however, a great many of the exchanges which it is anticipated will be made as the result of a regular fruit train service will be impossible. As to the price of Fiji bananas in Melbourne, I would point out that before the trade with Fiji ceased the Melbourne agents were in the habit of purchasing green bananas in Fiji while they were still on the trees. By buying their fruit on the plantations, and handling it direct, they were able to avoid much of the commission charges and other costs which Queensland growers have had to bear. It is well known that, in all the States, bananas grown in Queensland or on the Tweed River are offered for sale as Fiji bananas. No bananas have been brought in here from Fiji since 27th May last, yet in almost every fruit-shop window one can see fruit ticketed "Fiji bananas." The price of bananas here to-day is less than it has been for three or four years.

Senator GARDINER.—I invite the honorable senator to come down town with me this evening in order to prove that statement.

Senator REID.—I shall be happy to do so. I am not indulging in mere empty talk; I am prepared to join with the honorable senator in visiting a number of representative fruit shopkeepers to-morrow with the object of proving that bananas are selling to-day for less than the price for which they were selling two or three months ago. They are cheaper to-day than they have been for the last three or four years.

Senator ROWELL.—Because Queensland lately has been flooding the market.

Senator REID.—No; the Fruit-growers Association has been making

ample arrangements to supply all towns with their fruit. Naturally, when the Fiji trade was cut out the supply of bananas from Queensland was increased. Senator GARDINER said that when in Brisbane last week he had to pay 8d. a dozen for bananas, and that the shopkeeper from whom he made his purchase said that the increased price was due to the Tariff. That statement will not bear examination. The Tariff could have no effect on the price, since Fiji bananas are not sold in Brisbane. Brisbane is so close to the Tweed River and its local supplies that it does not pay to bring bananas from Fiji.

Senator GARDINER.—But the local agents have increased the price of the local article.

Senator REID.—Just as land agents, because of the demand, have been putting up the price of banana land to the returned soldiers and others who want to enter the industry. Bananas grown in Queensland or on the Tweed River will compare favorably with any grown in Fiji. Queensland bananas are marked up in many shop windows as having been grown in Fiji.

Senator KEATING.—Why should that be done if the Queensland bananas are superior?

Senator REID.—It is done by shopkeepers merely to overcome local prejudice.

Senator BOLTON.—What about the commercial morality that is responsible for such a thing?

Senator REID.—I am not upholding it; I am simply pointing out what is done. The majority of the people are really unable to distinguish between a Fiji and a Queensland banana. Senator Pratten has said that many Chinese are engaged in the banana industry. I have travelled through the Tweed River district and throughout Southern Queensland, where bananas are grown, and do not hesitate to say that there are not many Chinese in the industry. There may be a few, but most of them have been settled in Queensland or in the Tweed River district for many years. As soon as banana-growing commenced to pay handsomely, as it did for a time, in consequence of the effect of the war on the shipping service, these Chinese, like other settlers, went into the industry.

Senator GARDINER.—There are also Hindoo banana-growers.

Senator REID.—Very few. It cannot be denied that banana-growing is now a purely white man's industry, and on the broad ground of keeping up the standard of our civilization we should be prepared to support the duty as passed by another place.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—Order! The honorable senator's time has expired.

Senator SENIOR (South Australia) [6.28].—I listened with interest to the remarks made by Senator Reid, because he is a representative of Queensland, and should, therefore, have an intimate knowledge of the subject. He has declared that banana-growing is a white man's industry. About three years ago I paid my first visit to Queensland, and was particularly anxious to taste of its tropical fruits. I had been told that a freshly-cut banana was one of the most delicious of fruits, and I determined, when I reached the banana-growing districts, to lose no time in testing the truth of the statement. As a matter of fact, as soon as I reached Brisbane, I tried to obtain some Queensland bananas, but failed. I could get bananas grown in Fiji, but none that were locally produced.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Fiji bananas are not brought into Queensland.

Sitting suspended from 6.30 to 8 p.m.

Senator SENIOR.—I made special inquiries, of course, for Queensland bananas, but actually failed to get one until I had travelled beyond Cairns. When I reached Kuranda, and was inspecting a coffee plantation, I mentioned to my guide and host that I had not so far been able to buy a Queensland banana. He invited me to visit his home, and there he showed me half-a-dozen bananas, of different varieties, all of which had been grown by himself, and had just been plucked. These fruits were exceptionally good, but the extraordinary fact was that these were my first, although I had journeyed up through districts where the banana was supposed to be cultivated. The circumstances suggest the extent of the industry in the days, by the way, when the cultivation was in the hands of Chinamen. To-day, banana-growing is stated to be carried on almost solely by

white men. If the industry could not be made successful under cheap coloured labour, can it be said to have established itself profitably in the hands of Australians? It may be argued that success was impossible because land values were so high, but are land values any lower today, or so much lower that bananas can now be grown profitably by white men? It may be taken for granted that land values have not declined. This Committee is asked to acquiesce in the imposing of a high rate of duty in order to foster an industry which, apparently, cannot succeed, and which imposition will have the effect of making consumers pay more than ever for their bananas. Honorable senators should refuse to be stampeded into giving encouragement of the kind now sought to an industry in respect of which the price of land has been increased from about £5 to £200 per acre.

Senator CRAWFORD.—That is ridiculous, and is contrary to the facts.

Senator SENIOR.—During my visit I went to Babinda—a sugar-growing district not far from Cairns. Subsequently, while in a bank at Cairns, I had seen a poster announcing a land sale which had been conducted on the previous Saturday. Conversing with the bank manager upon the subject of land values in the neighbourhood, I ascertained that I had passed this exact piece of land during my visit to Babinda. I inquired the prices at which the blocks had been sold. He pointed to one on the plan, and said, "This was sold for between £48 and £50 an acre." I said, "Surely that was not anything like the average!" and he replied, "No; but the average was well above £35 per acre." I was astonished, and remarked that I had just seen the land, and had noticed that it was densely covered with timber. I was told, upon further inquiry, that the blocks would be used for growing sugar; whereupon I remarked that, with a clearing cost of £30 to £50 an acre, their price would be in the neighbourhood of £100 per acre before a single cut of cane could be taken off them. The bank manager agreed that my view was quite correct. It can be easily understood, then, that if men are willing to pay £100 per acre for scrub land, intended for sugar cultivation, a payment of £200 per acre for banana culture would

not be out of the way. I understand that bananas are planted about 10 feet apart.

Senator CRAWFORD.—As a rule, about 16 feet apart, which would give about 168 plants to the acre.

Senator SENIOR.—That is to say, the number of banana plants grown to the acre would be about twice that of the trees in an ordinary orchard; and, consequently, there would be considerably more profit per acre than can be secured from an orchard or vineyard. The effect of increasing the rate of duty will be to permit the owners of land on which bananas can be grown to reap the harvest. Queensland growers say that they have been supplying the Australian market during the past couple of months, in which Fiji bananas have been excluded. If that be the case, they have done so with the assistance of a duty of 1s. 6d. per cental.

Senator REID.—They have been supplying the market under the present rate.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—Order! The honorable senator's time has expired.

Senator PLAIN (Victoria) [8.15].—I had the pleasure of visiting Queensland a short time ago, and, like Senator Senior, took the opportunity of seeing many of the places which have been referred to. From what I saw, both close at hand and from a distance, banana-growing in those localities impressed me very much. It is essential, in discussing a question of this kind, in fairness to the men engaged in the industry, to analyze the conditions under which it is carried on. What I have to say refers to the southern part of Queensland, from which most of the bananas imported into this State come. If one feature of it more than another impressed me, it was the system of closer settlement. We, in Victoria, have endeavoured for many years to establish a system of entire closer settlement, but have failed, because the conditions here are quite different from those which I am about to describe. Bananas can be grown only with certain aspects and under certain favorable conditions. In the localities in which I saw them grown there are little pockets of land on the mountain side. These are very rich and heavily timbered, and in many instances are far from markets. There are

no such things as roads leading to these settlements; in fact, there are nothing but bush tracks. On a little pocket of this kind you may see a snug little homestead, occupied in most instances by young people with fine, healthy families. The homestead is surrounded by a small cleared space, which constitutes the banana patch. Beyond that space the ground is not suitable for banana-growing owing either to its aspect or to the poorer quality of the soil. Under conditions of that kind it is not possible for one man to monopolize a number of farms, because they are so far apart, and, therefore, industrious farmers, with their families, are compelled to settle on small areas. This constitutes what I call closer settlement in its entirety. Honorable senators have said that it is not necessary to put much cultivation into banana-growing. My observation convinces me that a man who desires to make a success of it must cultivate banana land as well as a citrus-grower has to cultivate his land. It is also necessary to manure heavily. I saw areas which were not properly cultivated, and where the grower went along in the slipshod fashion that we see occasionally among wheat farmers and citrus-growers in the South, but if we could follow the career of that man we would find that in every instance he failed. I agree with many honorable senators that we should, if we possibly could, give a cheap banana supply to the children of other States, particularly of Western Australia, who live so far from the locality where bananas are grown; but we must at the same time consider the interests of the children who depend for their livelihood on the growing of bananas. I am sure that Senator Lynch, Senator Drake-Brockman, and others desire to give the producers of Queensland a fair means of living, and their children ordinary standards of comfort; but I assure them that they cannot do that by giving cheap bananas to the people of the large cities, who live in comfort and luxury as compared with the families I have described. If I have anything to do with it, those honorable senators are not going to give cheap bananas to the children of the big cities at the expense of the children who have to put up with hardships in the remote parts of Queensland.

Senator Plain.

I have heard in this chamber to-night various descriptions of the value of banana lands, but my advice to Senator Pratten and Senator Drake-Brockman is to be guided by the old proverb about the shoemaker sticking to his last when they are dealing with questions with which they are not too conversant.

Senator PRATTEN.—We will let the public be the judges of that when they read *Hansard*.

Senator PLAIN.—When looking round the banana settlements I picked out a man who, I thought, was one of the very best producers of bananas in that locality. His work was far superior to anything I had seen, his little homestead stood right out, and his clearing was perfect. I asked him, "What price would you take for your land if you desired to sell out?" and he replied, "I would take £200 per acre." This was about eighteen months ago. I thought there was something radically wrong somewhere, so I took a mental note of the surroundings. I have jotted down the result of my observations in order to show honorable senators why banana land is worth £200 per acre. It is in small patches of from 5 to 10 acres, so that we may take 8 acres as an average. On an 8-acre holding such as I describe there will be a nice house, which is nothing out of the way, but merely comfortable and cosy. It cost at least £1,000 to put it there. The land when taken up was heavily timbered, and I can confirm Senator Senior's estimate that it would cost at least from £30 to £40 per acre to clear. I have put the clearing down at £30 per acre. I have allowed £100 for fencing and £100 for the conservation of water. I have put nothing down for the planting, because I could not form an idea of what the values were; but the house, clearing, dams, and fencing amount in value to £1,640. That man, therefore, if he sold his land for £200 per acre, would not get a penny for himself.

Senator EARLE.—There must be £200 worth of improvements per acre on it.

Senator PLAIN.—Yes. On 8 acres there would be over £1,600 worth of improvements. I said to myself, "What is behind all this? Here is a most intelligent farmer, who stands out in a most pronounced way as a cultivator of the soil, superior to any other settler in the

locality, and yet he will take £200 per acre for his land, although it has cost him more than that for his improvements." I asked him, "How have you done on this property for the last few years?" He said, "We have done fairly well. The conditions have been abnormal, because, owing to the shortage of shipping, we have had command of the market, and have been able to some extent to demand a reasonable price for our product; but now that we are coming back to normal conditions it will mean ruination to us if we are not given further protection." I can quite realize the position in which he was placed. There was no comparison between it and the position of citrus-growers in other States. Men at Merbein and Mildura can get £200, £300, and £400 per acre for their land at any time they care to sell it, although it cost them only about £2 per acre to clear, and water is brought on to it by channels paid for by the people of this country.

Senator PRATTEN.—The honorable senator will find the very reverse obtaining amongst the lemon-growers of Central Cumberland.

Senator PLAIN.—Are they successful?

Senator PRATTEN.—No.

Senator PLAIN.—I cannot help that, but I am sorry for them.

Senator ROWELL.—People who pay £400 per acre for land at Mildura will also be sorry for it shortly.

Senator PLAIN.—I do not think they will be. I am speaking of the orchard complete, as it stands, when I refer to Mildura land. If we vote against Protection for the banana industry, we shall be saying to the banana-growers of Australia, "We desire cheap Fijian bananas to be brought into this country, so that our children may enjoy the product of black labour, and you Queensland farmers must turn your energies to something else, sacrifice your little homes, and allow the patches which you have cleared to grow the wild eucalyptus once more. It is the Fijians whom we desire to supply cheap food to the people of Australia." As a producer, I cannot take up that position. It is the duty of those who represent Queensland, and this duty they have manfully discharged, to see that the growers of bananas in their State get a fair deal at the hands of this Committee.

Senator DUNCAN (New South Wales) [8.27].—I regret in many ways the trend which this debate has taken. The Committee should be able to consider any matter from the stand-point of Australia as a whole, and not as it affects one State or another. I was sorry during this debate to hear honorable senators speaking for or against the proposed duty merely from the stand-point of its effect upon their own particular State, and losing sight altogether of the larger issue whether the imposition of the duty would benefit Australia as a whole. I cannot consider the question purely from the stand-point of the State I represent, although that State is directly concerned. After Queensland, northern New South Wales produces the greater part of the bananas grown in Australia. It is, therefore, of some importance to New South Wales senators how this decision goes, and whether the duty proposed by the Government is retained or slightly lowered, or, as proposed by Senator Lynch, substantially reduced. Nor can I consider this matter purely from the stand-point of the consumer. The imposition of a Protective Tariff can hardly be considered at any time from the view-point of the consumers' interests. The object of a Protective Tariff is to give protection, not to the consumer, but to the producer, who may be either a manufacturer or, as in this case, a grower. In this instance, the imposition of the duty is to give a degree of protection to the producer, and the interests of the consumer are only a secondary consideration. Although I do not wish to lose sight of the interests of the consumer, I desire, in the first instance, to insure, if this industry needs protection, that we shall give it the protection that will enable it to continue and to be prosperous, while, at the same time, we must take great care that we do not afford it so much protection that the consumer will be prejudiced in consequence. The Government have undertaken certain obligations with regard to returned soldiers, and have, in conjunction with the States, settled returned soldiers on certain areas, for which large sums of money have been expended in order to give these men a reasonable start. Included in these areas are certain lands suitable for the production of bananas. It is true that a large number of returned

soldiers in Queensland and in the northern portion of New South Wales are devoting their energies to the production of bananas, and are doing as well as others who have been settled on the land in various other parts of the Commonwealth. These men have taken up land under abnormal circumstances because, when they returned from the Front, they entered into occupancy of their holdings on conditions which did not obtain before the war. We have heard that high prices have been paid for banana lands. That is quite true. I was in the northern district of New South Wales after the last general election, when I had an opportunity of inspecting a good deal of the land for which high prices had been paid. Any returned soldier who was successful in securing banana land at £100 per acre considered that he had made a good bargain.

Senator PRATTEN.—Was that for virgin land?

Senator DUNCAN.—Yes.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—With a protection of only 1s. 6d.?

Senator DUNCAN.—Yes.

Senator REID.—But the price of bananas was high.

Senator DUNCAN.—Yes, the price at that time was high, because shipping had been considerably interfered with, and, in consequence, the ruling freights were abnormal. The returns that were being received by the growers at that time were somewhat unusual, and returned soldiers seeking an investment for their money and an opening for the exercise of their energies saw that big returns were being obtained from banana lands being worked by old settlers.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—Is it not a fact that importations from abroad last year were less than one-fourth of those of the year before?

Senator DUNCAN.—That may be so. As a Parliament, we have encouraged these men to settle on the land, and large numbers who have paid high prices for their land are already engaged in this industry. If they are to succeed, they must receive a fairly substantial return for their product.

Senator JOHN D. MILLEN.—But Parliament did not guarantee the imposition of a prohibitive duty.

Senator DUNCAN.—No. We do not desire to impose a prohibitive duty; and I submit that that proposed and supported by Queensland senators is prohibitive. It is considerably more than the returned soldier settlers ever expected, and it is more than a fair thing, because it will have to be shouldered by a section of the community which can least afford to bear it. That being so, it is not my intention to record my vote in favour of the imposition of a high duty. We have to find some *via media* whereby we can give the right degree of protection to the grower, and insure that the consumer will not have to pay more than a fair price. I believe that the request submitted by Senator Pratten will meet the position, and honorable senators from Queensland will be well advised if they accept it, because it will afford a very large increase in the protection previously enjoyed by the banana-growers, and is to most of them an increase of nearly 200 per cent. It should be sufficient to protect them against abnormal importations from Fiji, whilst at the same time it will not altogether prohibit importation. I have a great deal of sympathy with the claims of the Fijian growers, who are assisting in developing a portion of the British Empire. We do not desire to declare in bald terms that we refuse to trade with a portion of the British Empire, particularly with a portion so near to Australia. We should impose a duty which would be of assistance to local producers, and one which would not be the means of totally excluding importations from Fiji. The request proposed by Senator Pratten will give our own producers protection without creating the impression that we desire to exclude Fijian bananas from the Australian market. I trust the request will be carried, because I believe it has been submitted in the interests of this industry, which promises to be a very important one to the Commonwealth.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—I direct the honorable senator's attention to the fact that Senator Pratten's indicated request will only be submitted in the event of the question before the Committee being rejected.

Senator DUNCAN.—I understand that that is the position. Unfortunately,

it is true that large numbers of Asiatics are employed in growing bananas in the northern districts of New South Wales. I do not know if they are employed on the Queensland banana lands. I have seen Asiatics living in tumble-down "shacks" that white men would not occupy, and under conditions repugnant to civilized men. If it is merely a question of giving protection to producers who live under such conditions I do not intend to assist them. But although these men are growing bananas, there is another large section of growers who deserve all the consideration we can give, and it is our duty to see that, while we do our utmost to conserve the interests of the consumer, we must not ruin those white men who are engaged in this industry, particularly in view of the promises made to them when they took up the land.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [8.40].—It must be admitted that the growing of bananas in Australia is of equal importance to the production of apples in Tasmania, and I believe that too much of the parochial spirit has been introduced into the discussion on this item. Honorable senators seem to desire to go to extremes. I am opposed to the imposition of a duty of 13s. 4d., because it would be robbery, and I am opposed to those who favour a high protective duty on apples and oranges, and who do not favour a reasonable duty on bananas. The banana-growers are as much entitled to protection as the growers of apples, which have to compete, not with the product of coloured labour, but with that of highly-civilized people in Canada and the United States of America. It is not my intention to go into details concerning the cultivation of the land for the production of apples and bananas.

Senator PAYNE.—Who has been discussing apple-growing?

Senator RUSSELL.—No one; but the growing of bananas must be considered in connexion with the production of other fruits. Nearly every State of the Commonwealth can produce apples, and Australia seems to be most adversely affected by the present duty on bananas, because of the distance of most centres of population from the districts where they are grown; but I believe that some day Western Australia will be

in a position to produce her own requirements in this direction. It seems unfair to place an unduly heavy burden on one State because of its inability to receive supplies at a reasonable rate; but at the same time Western Australia should be compelled to carry her share when we are endeavouring to legislate in the interests of the whole Commonwealth. For that reason, those who favour a high duty should agree to a reasonable compromise. The banana-growers in New South Wales and Queensland are entitled to protection.

Senator ROWELL.—I suppose the Government thought so when they introduced the Tariff?

Senator RUSSELL.—That is so. I do not think that the banana-growers should be given less consideration than other fruit-growers. We do not wish to divide our fruit producers into sections, but should endeavour to treat the banana-growers in Queensland with as much consideration as the fruit-growers in any other State. The duty on apples has been increased to 6s. per cental, and there is not the same necessity to protect apples as there is to protect Australian bananas against importations from Fiji, where they are produced by coloured labour. Banana-growing and apple-growing are both natural industries.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—But it takes seven years to get a return from an apple orchard, as against a few months in the case of a banana plantation.

Senator RUSSELL.—On the other hand, the orchardist gets a bigger return from apples. However, I am not placing the apple-grower and the banana-grower on the same level. Each is entitled to protection in some degree; but the banana-growers of Australia, who are white people raising white families in a White Australia, should not be asked to compete with the cheap black labour of other countries. I do not ask for a duty of 13s. 4d. per cental, as originally asked for by Queenslanders, but I do ask honorable senators to regard the industry as one worth protecting by the imposition of a reasonable rate, which will enable it to be developed. To-night it has been pointed out, by interjection, that already the industry has been built up with a Protective

duty of 1s. 6d. per cental; but, as a matter of fact, that rate has not been operative for the past three years, owing to the fact that during this period Fiji was suffering from a serious outbreak of influenza.

Senator BOLTON.—The importation of bananas from Fiji has increased in recent years.

Senator RUSSELL.—The honorable senator is apparently referring to the export of bananas from Fiji since the war, when it has been almost impossible for the island to send away its produce owing to the scarcity of shipping.

Senator KEATING.—During the war the importation of bananas from Fiji increased each year.

Senator RUSSELL.—That is true, but the quantity has fallen considerably since the Armistice. Queensland growers must be congratulated on their successful efforts in building up their trade during the war and the influenza period from an output worth £150,110 in 1916-17 to an output worth \$435,000 in 1918-19, the latest year for which the figures are available.

Senator LYNCH.—That development took place on the lower duty.

Senator RUSSELL.—It came about not because of the protection afforded by the duty, but because there was practically no importation of bananas from Fiji, owing to conditions over which this Parliament had no control. Some honorable senators have told us that Chinese are growing bananas in Queensland and in the northern part of New South Wales. In this connexion, the Customs Department has received two telegrams. The first, from the secretary of the Tweed Fruitgrowers' Co-operative Company Limited, says—

In refutation of allegations regarding Chinese engaged in the banana industry in the Tweed River, 300 *bona fide* banana-growers in the district hold shares in this company, representing approximately 3,000 acres. Not one Chinese grower is on our share register and no Chinese labour is employed by shareholders. Similar conditions apply to Queensland banana areas south of Southport. About 60,000 cases of bananas from Tweed Heads, and 40,000 from Currumbin have been raised south during the past twelve months, all European grown.

The other telegram, from a Mr. Stuart, secretary of an organization at Murwillumbah, says—

Four thousand acres under bananas Tweed River; 222,000 cases produced for year ending April by 600 Europeans. Not one Chinaman engaged in production either as freeholder, leaseholder, or as employee. Area in Queensland south of Southport produced 40,000 cases in the same period. No Chinese in any way interested.

Senator PRATTEN.—Those telegrams do not definitely say that there are no Chinese growers.

Senator RUSSELL.—I do not contend that there are no Chinese engaged in the business. My point is that, while we ought to protect this national industry we should do so in a way which will not enable certain individuals to extract unfair profits from others. The fruit we produce should be sold at a reasonable price which will afford reasonable profits to the growers. The proposal of the Queensland representatives for a duty of 13s. 4d. per cental would fall very heavily on the great majority of the people of the Commonwealth.

Senator KEATING.—The Government's proposal was to make the duty 2s. 6d. per cental.

Senator RUSSELL.—That is so. We have had a very profitable debate upon this question. I do not think any honorable senator is anxious to injure the banana-growing industry. I suggest a reasonable compromise, which, while affording it protection, will, at the same time, not injure the children of Australia, who eat so many bananas. The Government are prepared to consider any reasonable suggestion, but they do not propose to deny to the banana-growers protection equal to that afforded to Australians engaged in other industries.

Senator BOLTON (Victoria) [8.55].—An Australian Parliament must legislate for the greatest good of the greatest number. We are told that the banana-growing industry has been carried on profitably and successfully under a Protective duty of 1s. 6d. per cental. Arguments about the progress made during the war because of certain conditions prevailing elsewhere are quite useless. As a matter of fact, during the war the Fiji growers were able to export to Australia

a largely increased quantity of bananas. But all this development has taken place under a duty of 1s. 6d. per cental. Last year, however, the Government, possibly in following out their Protective policy, and no doubt having due regard to the interests of this particular industry, raised the duty by nearly 100 per cent., and I cannot see why the banana-grower should expect more generous treatment. Yet extraordinary efforts have been made to influence opinion in this building by means of picture shows and other representations. I do not see why nine-tenths of the people of Australia should be penalized for the benefit of one small section. The demand of the Queensland banana-growers for a rate of 1d. per lb. is a clear case of an attempt to profiteer on the rest of the people of Australia, in whose interests I feel it my duty to support the amendment.

Senator REID (Queensland)—[8.57].—If the Senate can see its way clear to encourage that closer settlement to which Senator Plain has drawn attention as being a question which affects all the States, by affording Protection to any particular industry, I think it ought to do so. The banana-growing industry is one which can be carried on by the individual or the family. A good return can be secured from 10 acres of land, an area which one individual can work successfully. A larger block can be subdivided among the members of one family, and worked as a family group. Banana-growing is an industry that will give people the opportunity of settling on the land under fairly reasonable conditions. It will enable them to live close to one another, so that they may have community entertainments and schooling for their children. Thus it will help to solve one of the labour problems of Australia. The banana industry affords special facilities for close settlement. At the present time the primary producer is faced with the necessity of paying very high wages. The last log submitted to the Arbitration Court by rural workers has given primary producers some anxiety, and that is another reason why encouragement should be given to an industry which can be successfully carried on by individuals doing the work of their farms themselves, while producing a valuable food for the people.

Senator BOLTON.—The honorable senator would prohibit the people from getting that food.

Senator REID.—I desire just as strongly as do other honorable senators that bananas should be as cheap as possible to the consumer; but, at the same time, I wish to protect an industry which lends itself to close settlement, which is one of the vital problems in Queensland and in New South Wales. I remind honorable senators from South Australia that this Parliament, in its wisdom, has voted millions of pounds for an irrigation scheme to improve the Murray Valley. I visited the scene of operations with other honorable senators, and I am prepared to admit that I consider the scheme one of the finest that has been carried out in Australia. I point out that the money to pay for it is being provided by the people of Australia generally.

Senator BOLTON.—Not the whole of it. Certain States are contributing to the cost.

Senator REID.—Certain States are contributing to the cost, but the Commonwealth has advanced a very considerable sum to cover the expenditure involved. If the Commonwealth Parliament had not undertaken to advance money for the purpose the scheme could not be carried out.

Senator BOLTON.—The improvement of the Murray Valley was started by the private enterprise of the Chaffey Brothers.

Senator REID.—The Commonwealth Government is carrying out the scheme now undertaken.

Senator CRAWFORD.—The Commonwealth has put £2,000,000 into the Murray Waters scheme.

Senator REID.—That is so. We have given the production of currants a protection of 3d. per lb., which is a larger measure of protection than has been given to the banana industry. This is the first time in the history of the banana industry when it may be said that it is in the hands of white men. Bananas cannot be stored in the same way as dried fruits. Unless they are dried and made into banana flour, bananas must be sold within a limited time after they are cut. I appeal to honorable senators, if they are unwilling to give the banana-growers of

the Tweed River and Queensland all that they are asking for, to deal with the industry in as generous a spirit as possible. I do not wish to dilate on the White Australia policy, but we have set up certain high standards for the Commonwealth, and I feel sure that no member of the Committee would favour any lowering of those standards. I have said that the banana industry lends itself to close family settlement, which, in turn, overcomes the labour difficulty in primary production. I hope that honorable senators will do all that they can to encourage this industry by dealing with it as generously as possible.

Senator KEATING (Tasmania)

[9.5].—I wish to add a few words to what I have already said on the request submitted by Senator Lynch. I listened to what was said respecting the alteration in the output of bananas in Queensland during the war period. I have not yet heard any refutation of the figures I advanced as to the imports during the period covered by the war. Those figures clearly show that during the war and up to the time of the armistice the importation of bananas was substantial, and, if anything, showed a gradual increase. Since that time there has been a tremendous drop in the importations, and there has been a larger proportion of the Australian demand for bananas supplied by Queensland and the Northern Rivers districts of New South Wales. That occurred under the pre-existing duty. The proposal of the Government, as the Tariff was originally introduced, was to raise the duty from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. per cental. As Senator Bolton has pointed out, that represented very generous treatment to the industry. On the top of that, honorable members in another place raised the duty from 2s. 6d. to 8s. 4d. per cental. Senator Reid, speaking earlier in the debate, said that "Fiji has been cut out." He told us that, since the 27th May, no Fiji bananas have come into the Commonwealth. Later on he referred to the period since when "Fiji has been cut out." That is an admission that the Tariff, as it stands at present, is, under this item, not merely protective, but prohibitive. If there is one case in which we should not at this time go beyond necessary protection into the realms of prohibition, it is in con-

nexion with trade with British Possessions in the Pacific Ocean.

Senator DE LARGIE.—And with a food supply of the people.

Senator KEATING.—Exactly. We have been told that Fiji has been cut out, and it has been complained by the people of Fiji that they have been cut out. We know, as a matter of fact, that the *Levuka*, a very large vessel, and well-fitted, not merely for the carriage of bananas and other tropical products, but also for the carriage of passengers, which was engaged in the trade of Fiji for many years, has been taken out of that trade.

Senator CRAWFORD.—That was decided more than twelve months ago.

Senator KEATING.—That statement may or may not be correct, but it has been publicly claimed, and, so far as I know, not so publicly denied, if denied at all, that it was in consequence of the fact that no bananas were being imported from Fiji that the *Levuka* was taken out of that trade. Whether that be so or not, the prohibition, which in effect this duty means, of this trade between Fiji and Australia involves the lessening of our commercial relations with a British Possession in the Pacific. As a result of the war, Australia has assumed obligations in connexion with mandates. The position of Australia with regard to these mandates is being viewed very jealously, not merely by our former enemies, but by some who, during the war, were our Allies. If there was ever a time when the Possessions of the British Empire in the southern seas and in the Pacific should be drawn closely together in all their relations, it is the present time. Such a policy as that involved in the duty under consideration will not tend in that direction, but will have the opposite effect. For these reasons, I am not disposed to support a duty which has proved to be prohibitive of our trade with Fiji in the products of this staple industry of that British Possession. I think that a duty of 2s. 6d. per cental would afford Australian producers of bananas adequate, if not generous, protection. It would not give them a monopoly, but under such a duty competition from Fiji would be handicapped, and the Australian industry would not suffer. If I thought that it would I should have to review the position. Feeling as I do

with regard to the maintenance and development of our trade relations with Fiji and other British Possessions in the Pacific, and assuming, as I have been invited to do by representations of the industry recently shown in the Queen's Hall, that it is in a flourishing condition in Queensland, I am strongly impelled to support the request submitted by Senator Lynch.

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [9.11].—I have no desire to unduly delay the taking of a vote on the question before the Chair, but I must say a word or two in reply to some statements made by other speakers. I begin with Senator Senior's announcement that during a visit he paid to Queensland three years ago he could obtain no Queensland bananas, whilst an abundance of Fijian bananas was on sale wherever he went. I do not wish for a moment to question Senator Senior's veracity, but I shall certainly, in future, discount by 100 per cent. everything I hear the honorable senator say. I have lived in Queensland for thirty years, and throughout the whole of that time I have never seen a Fijian banana in that State, whilst, to my knowledge, there has been in the coastal centres, at any rate, an abundant supply of home-grown bananas. With regard to land prices, I should like to read a couple of advertisements from the *Brisbane Courier* of the 1st August. Here is one—

Banana and pineapple farm, 30 acres, 12 acres cultivated. Comfortable dwelling, two horses, cart, implements. Half-a-mile from railway station—£950.

Senator EARLE.—Where is the £200 an acre man now?

Senator CRAWFORD.—Yes, where is he?

Senator LYNCH.—The advertisement refers to pineapples, which do not grow on rich soil.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Here is another advertisement—

Bananas.—330 acres freehold, rich scrub and forest. 5,000 bananas (which would represent about 30 acres), 500 citrus trees. Bargain—£2,300. On easy terms.

It is quite a mistake to imagine, as Senator Lynch evidently does, that it is impossible to grow bananas and pineapples successfully on the same kind of soil. It can be done, and is being done. Honorable senators may see pineapples, bananas,

custard apples, strawberries, and almost every kind of tropical and sub-tropical fruit growing on the same class of soil within a few miles of Brisbane. I do not wish to discount the importance of the numerous islands in the Pacific over which Australia has been given a mandate. Even if it be necessary to develop the trade with these islands, Queensland should not be called upon to make the whole of the sacrifice, as she has been asked to do in connexion with this item. If bananas were being grown in Victoria, Tasmania, and South Australia, this duty would not have been debated for five minutes; it would have been agreed to almost without comment. But because bananas are at present grown extensively only in two States the industry has not received that consideration which its importance deserves. The attitude of representatives of other States towards this industry in my State will have an important influence upon my attitude towards the industries of their States. Senator Bolton said that he would follow in every instance that policy which would yield the greatest good to the greatest number. Therefore, I suppose if there are 2,500,000 producers in Australia, and 3,000,000 consumers, Senator Bolton will always give first consideration to the interests of the consumers. If that attitude were adopted by the majority of honorable senators Protection would very soon be a thing of the past.

Senator BOLTON.—Protection is valueless when it becomes prohibitive.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Is there not prohibitive protection in respect of many other items? Does Senator Bolton say that, whilst an import duty of 1d. per lb. on bananas is prohibitive, the same duty on citrus fruits is not prohibitive? Wherein lies the difference except that bananas are produced mainly in Queensland, whilst citrus fruits are common to all the States, and, therefore, receive greater consideration? I ask honorable senators to seriously ponder over this item. More is involved in their vote than its effect upon the banana industry. Senator de Largie may smile, but before this Tariff is disposed of he may find himself in the same position as I occupy to-day—asking for some assistance for an industry peculiar to his State, and unable to get for it fair consideration. I ask the Committee

to declare that if there is to be any difference between the treatment given to tropical products and that given to the products of the temperate zone, special consideration should be shown to the former because of the cheap labour against which they have to compete. We are all determined to uphold the White Australia policy, but we cannot maintain it and expect our products to compete successfully, without substantial protection, against the products of countries which do not pay a weekly wage equal to the daily wage we have to pay.

Senator BOLTON.—The banana industry has done that successfully already.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Under special circumstances. The reason why the production of bananas has increased in Queensland is that many returned soldiers have been encouraged and assisted to engage in the industry. These men, having been advised to enter into this business, and having been financed by the Commonwealth, are now to be deprived of the chance of achieving success by the refusal of this Senate to give them adequate protection.

Senator BOLTON. — How long does it take a banana plantation to become productive?

Senator CRAWFORD. — A banana-grower will receive a small return at the end of the first twelve months, but it takes three years for a plantation to come into full bearing.

Senator BOLTON.—Then the returned soldiers cannot be making very much money yet.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Quite a number of returned soldiers engaged in the fruit-growing industry before the Repatriation Department was established.

Senator DUNCAN.—And many took over plantations as going concerns.

Senator CRAWFORD.—That is so. Much has been said about the withdrawal of the *Levuka* from the Fiji trade, but she is now employed in the coastal trade, and she would not be so employed if the owners had not seen a good prospect of running the vessel profitably. Surely the Inter-State trade is just as important as is the trade with Fiji and the other Pacific Islands. Whilst honorable senators should have some regard to the trade with the islands, they should not ask one State

to sacrifice its banana industry for the sake of a problematical advantage to a small number of people employing a class of labour different from that employed in Queensland, and who may, if adequate protection is not given to other industries, be competitors with the Australian producers in respect of them also.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [9.24].—Senator Crawford has complained that we are asking Queensland to make some sacrifice. If we could maintain the trade with the Pacific Islands, the producers of Queensland would benefit more than would those of any other State. The people of the islands buy from us beef, tinned meats, tinned fruits, and butter in very large quantities. Queensland is the greatest butter-producing State; I do not know whether it has yet reached the peak of its production, but it is sure to do so in a reasonable time, and then Queensland will be right ahead of every other State in that industry. Half of the cattle of the Commonwealth are in that State, and, therefore, it is the biggest producer of beef also. Here is an opportunity, not of crushing out the banana industry, but of developing other industries in that State. A few years ago a Protectionist Government said that 1s. 6d. per cental was ample protection for bananas. Then a Protectionist Minister representing a banana-producing State—I refer to the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene)—had an opportunity of introducing a Tariff, and he declared that 2s. 6d. per cental was ample protection. But some irresponsible people in another place increased the duty to 8s. 4d. per cental. I believe that if the Senate decreased the duty to 2s. 6d. it would, perhaps, be giving more protection than the banana-growers expect. The proposal before the Committee is one of fair protection rather than of no protection. A comparison has been made between banana plantations and orchards. We have been told that from a banana plantation the grower gets his first crop within twelve months, that the second year's crop is the best, and that in the third year the crop is declining. When the farm is planted the bananas come up almost like corn, and give some return in the first year. When a man establishes an apple orchard, however, he tends it,

sprays it, prunes it, and protects it against pests for six or seven years before he gets any return from it.

Senator REID.—But then he has it for a life-time.

Senator GARDINER.—He waits at least six years before there is any return, and then the return is very poor.

Senator Sir THOMAS GLASGOW.—But his fruit competes with white-grown apples, whereas the banana has to compete with a cheap-labour product.

Senator GARDINER.—Senator Crawford's figures in regard to the extraordinary prices of land at Rockhampton are proof that banana land is infinitely superior to the wheat lands which people cultivate in New South Wales.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Bananas cannot be grown on wheat land any more than wheat can be grown on banana land.

Senator GARDINER.—I recognise that Queensland has some of the richest land in the world.

Senator CRAWFORD.—The banana land is too rich for wheat.

Senator GARDINER.—That is so. Senator Duncan referred to the soldiers who had entered into the banana industry, and said he would vote for a high duty in order to protect them. What about the soldiers engaged in the poultry industry, or in wheat production, or in the butter districts, who are asked to pay a high duty to protect the banana growers whose land is worth the high prices which Senator Duncan has quoted to us? Are all these soldiers in other States who are settled upon land which gives a meagre reward for the labour expended upon it to be taxed for the rest of their natural lives for the protection of a man cultivating land that is worth as much as £200 per acre? That sum of money will buy a wheat farm in Queensland or New South Wales; yet the wheat-growers, who toil against drought and other difficulties, are asked to maintain upon the land men who are getting such enormous returns as those which have been related to the Committee to-day. Consider the position of the other States. Western Australia is a wonderful fruit-producing State; in Perth I tasted fruit as fine as any I have ever eaten; and what consideration are the people of that State to receive? If their fruit can be sent

across to Java in exchange for the products which Java can send to Western Australia, why should not that trade be developed? Why not be reasonable, and realize that there is an opportunity of developing a profitable trade by exchanging goods between Western Australia and Java?

Senator CRAWFORD.—The honorable senator does not believe in protecting anything.

Senator GARDINER.—Absolutely not, because, by the time protection has been given all round, a man is made to pay more to protect the other fellow than the protection he receives. In regard to the trade with the Pacific Islands, the war is over, and we have mandates over certain islands in the Pacific. Are we to shut out the products of our mandated territories? We have an opportunity of getting our share of the Empire's trade, yet we are not only seriously curtailing the opportunities for trade, but are interfering with the supplies of a fruit that has become an important item of the diet of our children, particularly those of the working class.

Question—That the request (Senator LYNCH's) be agreed to—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	10
Noes	17
Majority				7

AYES.

Bolton, W. K.	Lynch, P. J.
de Largie, H.	Millen, John D.
Drake-Brockman, E. A.	Rowell, J.
Elliott, H. E.	Teller:
Henderson, G.	Buzacott, R.
Keating, J. H.	

NOES.

Bakhap, T. J. K.	Pearce, G. F.
Benny, E.	Plain, W.
Cox, C. F.	Pratten, H. E.
Crawford, T. W.	Russell, E. J.
Duncan, W. L.	Senior, W.
Earle, J.	Vardon, E. C.
Givens, T.	Wilson, R. V.
Glasgow, Sir Thomas	Teller:
Payne, H. J. M.	Reid, M.

PAIR.

Gardiner, A.	Millen, E. D.
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Question so resolved in the negative.

Request negatived.

Request (by Senator PRATTEN) proposed—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make the duty, per lb., 4d.

Question put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	21
Noes	7

Majority	14
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AYES.

Benny, B.	Payne, H. J. M.
Bolton, W. K.	Pearce, G. F.
Buzacott, R.	Plain, W.
Drake-Brockman, E. A.	Pratten, H. E.
Duncan, W. L.	Rowell, J.
Elliott, H. E.	Russell, E. J.
Gardiner, A.	Senior, W.
Henderson, G.	Vardon, E. C.
Keating, G. H.	Wilson, R. V.
Lynch, P. J.	Teller:
Millen, John D.	de Largie, H.

NOES.

Bakhap, T. J. K.	Givens, T.
Cox, C. F.	Glasgow, Sir Thomas
Crawford, T. W.	Teller:
Earle, J.	Reid, M.

PAIR.

Thomas, J.	Adamson, J.
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Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Request agreed to.

Item agreed to, subject to request.

Item 53—

Fruits, Dried, viz.:—

(A) Currants, raisins, and other; Ginger preserved (not in liquid); Desiccated banana, banana flour, and peel candied, drained or dried, per lb., 3d.

Senator EARLE (Tsamania) [9.43].

—This item covers the product which is known as dried or evaporated apples. I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to insert the following sub-item:—

“(D) Apples, dried, or evaporated, per lb., British, 4d.; intermediate, 4d.; general, 4d.”

Dried apples are produced in three States of the Commonwealth, so that the imposition of a higher duty cannot possibly lead to a monopoly. Producers in the several States will compete with each other for the supply of the market throughout Australia, and consumers will benefit from the stabilization of the industry. Apple driers, and orchardists who

look to them to make large purchases, at present have no sense of security, since from time to time dried apples from America are dumped in the Commonwealth. We have not exported dried or evaporated apples in any quantity except during the year 1917, when, owing to the lack of insulated space on oversea steamers, and the danger of the whole apple crop perishing, the fruit-growers of Australia induced the Federal Government to negotiate with the Imperial authorities for the purchase of a very considerable quantity of dried apples. The overtures were successful, and although the price obtained was so moderate as to return but little to the apple-growers of Tasmania, Victoria, and Western Australia, even that was better than allowing the fruit to perish in the orchards. With that exception, we have exported only a very small quantity, most of the dried apples produced in Australia being consumed locally. Dried apples are retailed at something like 8d. or 9d. per lb., so that the increased duty for which I ask represents, roughly, 50 per cent. of their price, but as the industry is spread over at least three States, the increased duty, I maintain, would not affect the selling price.

Senator PRATTEN.—Do we import any dried apples?

Senator EARLE.—Yes. In the Customs statistics they are bulked with importations of dried fruits generally, so that I doubt whether particulars can be gained as to the actual weight that we import every year. From time to time, however, whenever the American market is over-supplied, dried apples are dumped on the Australian market. The practice is one in which every country indulges. If a country is over-supplied with any particular commodity, it is glad to export its surplus, even if it has to sell it at rates below those prevailing in the home market.

Senator CRAWFORD.—That is done with Australian dried fruits.

Senator EARLE.—It is a common practice. The dumping of apples from America places apple driers here at a disadvantage. I submit this request with confidence, because I am satisfied that instead of injuring, it will really con-

serve the interests of consumers as well as of producers. It will lead to the greater stability of the industry, and, consequently, to an increased supply, which must regulate the price to the consumer.

Senator COX (New South Wales) [9.52].—I should be glad if Senator Earle would include dried apricots, peaches, and nectarines in his request. All these fruits are grown and dried in New South Wales and other States, and the fruit-growers need all the protection we can give them.

Senator EARLE.—Are the soft fruits mentioned by the honorable senator dried in any State except New South Wales?

Senator COX.—Yes.

Senator KEATING.—I thought that the honorable senator was a Free Trader?

Senator COX.—I am; but since every other industry is being protected, I think that fruit-growers, who have to contend with most serious difficulties, are entitled to the same consideration. The orchardists have to contend with all sorts of pests. They have not only to pay high prices for their land, but have to wait some years for their orchards to come into full profit. If Senator Earle will include apricots, pears, and nectarines in his request, I will support it.

Senator SENIOR.—Also dried pears?

Senator COX.—Yes, I would also favour the inclusion of dried pears.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [9.55].—The Government are unable to accept Senator Earle's proposal, inasmuch as the increased duty would be out of proportion to the value of the commodity to which it is sought to apply it. The price obtained for dried apples does not compare with that secured by the orchardist for his fresh fruit. I have had some experience in this matter, since I handled the 40,000 tons of dried apples that the British Government kindly purchased from us at a time when oversea vessels with the insulated space necessary to convey our fresh fruits to Great Britain were not available. On one occasion I visited a factory where the fruit was being dried, in order to see whether the conditions laid down for the payment of the bonus on

dried fruit were being carried out. I saw at work there a number of young women who were beautifully gowned, and who were drying apples the like of which could not be obtained in a Swanston-street fruit shop for less than 1s. per lb. It occurred to me that a special show was being made for my benefit, and I therefore asked that a box of dried fruit which had been nailed up in the absence of the Customs officials should be opened. I was at once informed that much better samples were to be found lower down in the stack, but I insisted that the particular box to which I had first drawn attention should be opened, and found that the "good old windfall" was very much in evidence. For the most part, only "windfalls" are dried or evaporated. It would not pay so to treat high-class fruit. Where a bounty is paid on the production of such a commodity, it is necessary to establish a Customs bond in order to make sure that a first class article is being turned out. I do not say that only apples of inferior quality are dried or evaporated; my point is that apples that would find a ready sale in the fresh fruit market are not so treated. The existing duty is equal to more than 40 per cent. of the value of the article, and I do not think we should increase it.

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [9.58].—I have not had such an experience of the dried fruit industry as that related by the Minister (Senator Russell). In that part of the Commonwealth in which I chiefly reside when I am not in Melbourne, large quantities of dried apples are used, and the quality is all that could be desired. The same remark would apply to the dried fruits mentioned by Senator Cox, and particularly to dried nectarines, which seem to retain their natural flavour better than any other fruits which I know. It is our duty to do whatever we can to assist the fruit industry generally. At the present moment it is facing a crisis, due chiefly to over-production. In all the States so many people have been encouraged by the advice and financial assistance offered by their Governments to become fruit-growers that in every branch of the industry we are faced with over-production. While our production is in excess of requirements, and fruit can be obtained at

a reasonable price, no fruit should be permitted to be imported. If fruit could be brought in from overseas there would be loss, not only to the man on the land, but to the Governments tendering financial support.

Senator BOLTON.—Would the honorable senator prevent fresh apples from entering from America?

Senator CRAWFORD.—I would have no objection to such importations, provided that Australian-grown apples were not procurable at a reasonable price. We have considerable provision for cool storage, and, generally, there is a fair supply of Australian apples throughout the year. I am prepared to give reasonable encouragement, by means of the Tariff, to any branch of the fruit-growing industry, but there should be fair play all round; and I shall want to know, for example, why dates, which are a tropical product, should be given protection to the extent of only 1d. per lb., compared with the protection granted in other directions.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—Does Senator Earle include in his motion for a request the words suggested by Senator Cox?

Senator EARLE.—No, sir; I prefer not to cloud the issue.

Progress reported.

ADJOURNMENT.

TARIFF DEBATE.

Senator PEARCE (Western Australia—Minister for Defence) [10.4].—In moving—

That the Senate do now adjourn,

I trust that I may be pardoned if I appeal to honorable senators to permit of rather more rapid progress than has been achieved so far with the Tariff schedule. Honorable senators who may be desiring a respite before another place resumes its sittings will not have their wishes fulfilled if the rate of dealing with the items in the schedule is not speeded up. Instead, the Senate is likely to be still sitting when another place resumes after its adjournment.

Senator DE LARGIE (Western Australia) [10.5].—I desire to correct a statement which I made in the Senate some time ago when speaking upon the

Tariff. I was referring to a Tariff which was under consideration of the New South Wales Parliament, and I stated that Senator Gardiner, as a member of that Legislature, had voted, together with other members, for the removal of certain duties. I find now that, in the case of Senator Gardiner, I was in error; that, indeed, the honorable senator was not at the time a member of the New South Wales Parliament. He had been a member a few months previously. Seeing that he could not have taken part in the division to which I alluded, I naturally desire to acknowledge and correct my mistake.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [10.6].—I am sorry that Senator de Largie has taken the trouble to make his explanation, because I am bound to say that, had I been in the New South Wales Parliament at the time, I would have voted precisely as he erroneously said I did.

The Minister for Defence (Senator Pearce) has appealed for expedition with respect to the consideration of the Tariff schedule. It should not be forgotten that the Government have "slept on" the Tariff for some twelve or eighteen months. If the whole business be got through by Christmas, they should be well satisfied. There are more than 400 items, and very few have been dealt with, despite the earnest efforts of honorable senators to-day. I have been away for a fortnight, and I hoped that the Committee would have finished with the schedule before my return. The Tariff, however, is too important to warrant hurry. The Government may think that, because they have prepared it, and it has been in operation for many months, it is perfect. They must realize, however, that during the period in which the schedule operated prior to this Parliament being given an opportunity to deal with it ample opportunities were afforded of perceiving its defects. If the Parliament has finally dealt with the schedule by Christmas, so that there may be then a brief recess with a view to a resumption in the New Year, that should be satisfactory to the Government.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Senate adjourned at 10.8 p.m.

Senate.

Thursday, 4 August, 1921.

The PRESIDENT (Senator the Hon. T. Givens) took the chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN REPRESENTATION.

Senator GARDINER.—I ask the Leader of the Government if it is a fact that, owing to the neglect of the South Australian Parliament to conform to the Constitution, a senator is prevented from attending our meetings. Will the Government communicate with the South Australian Parliament, protesting against its disregard of the Constitution?

Senator PEARCE.—I do not know that the Government have any official knowledge of the circumstances, the matter, I think, being within the province of the President.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL ELLIOTT.

Senator DUNCAN.—In view of the controversy in the press between the Minister for Defence and a certain honorable senator, will the honorable gentleman allow the papers connected with the non-appointment of Brigadier-General Elliott to a divisional command to be laid on the table of the Library for the information of the Senate?

Senator PEARCE.—I have no objection to the laying of the papers on the table of the Library, and I shall take steps to have them placed there.

PETROL IMPORTATION.

Senator BOLTON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Trade and Customs, upon notice—

1. The number and names of firms engaged in importation of petrol and allied products?
2. The yearly quantity and value of such imports by each firm for five years from 1916?
3. The income tax paid by those firms?

Senator RUSSELL.—The answers are—

1 and 2. It is the established practice of the Department not to divulge any information affecting the business of individual firms.

3. The law does not permit this information to be divulged.

DEFENCE LEGAL DEPARTMENT.

Senator ELLIOTT asked the Minister for Defence, upon notice—

1. What are the nature and subject of the new Legal Department proposed to be constituted in connexion with the Department for Defence?

2. Will the Minister state how many officers it is proposed to appoint directly or indirectly in consequence of the proposed new Department, and what salaries it is proposed to pay them?

3. Will such salaries be paid irrespective of the work performed by them or will they be paid in accordance with work actually performed?

4. Will any other duties in the Military Forces be assigned to them whilst not engaged in work of a legal character?

5. What is the total annual estimated expenditure in the new Department, including salaries?

6. From previous experience in times of peace, how many courts martial are likely to be dealt with annually?

7. In view of the great necessity for economy at present, will the Minister agree to postpone making any appointments under the new scheme until Parliament has had an opportunity of discussing it in detail?

Senator PEARCE.—The answers are—

1-5. The Army Legal Department will consist of officers serving in the Citizen Forces not exceeding in number seven lieutenant-colonels, fifteen majors, and eighteen captains distributed throughout the Commonwealth attached to the various formations. The duties will extend to an equivalent of, approximately, sixteen days a year, which is the ordinary duration of the annual training of the Citizen Forces. Each member will receive the ordinary Citizen Force pay of his rank for not more than sixteen days each year, namely, lieutenant-colonel, £30, major £24, and captain £18, on the satisfactory performance of duty. The total annual expenditure will not exceed £894.

The duties of members of the legal section will be instructional, advisory, and executive. They will be required to instruct officers of the Forces in military law and their duties in the administration, of discipline—instruction of great importance, the lack of which in the past was greatly felt during the earlier period of the late war.

The members of the legal section will also instruct and advise in matters relating to the administration of the Act and regulations especially in regard to the institution of proceedings under the Act in civil Courts for offences by defaulting trainees. They will also advise formation commanders and other conveying and confirming authorities on legal questions affecting courts martial.

6. It is difficult to submit an estimate, but it is not anticipated that the numbers will be large. The duties in connexion with courts

martial, however, will form only a small portion of the duties of a legal staff officer, the greater portion of the latter being of an instructional and advisory nature.

7. Having in view the low expenditure entailed and the very great benefits which it is anticipated will be obtained from the system, it is not proposed to delay the establishment of the Army legal section.

BOOK POSTAGE.

Senator GARDINER asked the Minister representing the Postmaster-General, *upon notice*—

1. Is it a fact that a book on an economic matter is classed as printed paper and charged "printed paper" rates?

2. Is it a fact that the postal authorities' interpretation of a book is a "novel"?

3. Will the Minister state what is the interpretation of a book for posting purposes?

Senator RUSSELL.—The answers supplied by the Postmaster-General are—

1. Not necessarily. It would depend upon whether or not it is entitled to the special rate fixed by Parliament for certain books.

2. Not that I am aware of.

3. Parliament has not given me power to define what is a book, but only to say what shall not be sent at the rate fixed by Parliament for certain books in order to assist the legitimate Australian author who writes a book in the ordinary acceptance of the term (*vide Hansard*, vol. LXI., page 1445).

SUPERPHOSPHATE.

Senator PRATTEN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

What were the total imports of manufactured superphosphate into Australia in the five-year periods ended 30th June, 1910, 30th June, 1915, 30th June, 1920, and for twelve months ended 30th June, 1921—

(a) From within the Empire?

(b) From foreign countries?

Senator RUSSELL.—The information is being obtained.

PIANOS.

Senator PRATTEN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Trade and Customs, *upon notice*—

What were the total numbers of pianos imported into Australia in the five-year periods ended 30th June, 1910, 30th June, 1915, 30th June, 1920, and for twelve months ended 30th June, 1921—

(a) From within the Empire?

(b) From foreign countries?

Senator RUSSELL.—The information is being obtained.

CUSTOMS TARIFF BILL.

In Committee (Consideration resumed from 3rd August, *vide* page 10714):

Item 53—

Fruits, dried, viz.:—

(A) Currants, raisins, and other; ginger, preserved (not in liquid); desiccated banana, banana flour, and peel, candied, drained, or dried, per lb., 3d.

(B) Dates, per lb., 1d.

(C) Prunes . . . per lb., 4½d.

Upon which Senator EARLE had moved—

That the House of Representatives be requested to insert the following sub-item:—

(D) Apples, dried or evaporated, per lb., British, 4d.; intermediate, 4d.; general, 4d.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—Is it the intention of Senator Cox to move to add "apricots, peaches, nectarines, and pears?"

Senator Cox.—Yes.

The CHAIRMAN.—Then the question is that the request be amended by the insertion of those words after the word "Apples."

Senator PAYNE (Tasmania) [3.9].—Senator Earle's proposal seems to be a necessary one, because those engaged in apple-growing occupy a difficult position each year in regard to the marketing of their best fruit, especially that which has to be sent overseas. Difficulties have been experienced for years in securing space in order that the best grade of apples may be shipped to the Old Country. That top grade, however, does not constitute the whole of the crop, and it is essential that fruit-growers should be given every opportunity to realize upon the remainder, which does not go upon the market through the ordinary channels—that is to say, by being shipped overseas, or to other States. A considerable portion of the crop is composed of apples which, although good and wholesome, do not come under the category set out by the Minister (Senator Russell). He may have seen a few windfalls among apples which had been evaporated. But there are large quantities which, owing to lack of size and attractive colourings, are also evaporated. Tasmanian orchardists have not had an easy time for years past. One reason has had to do with the difficulty of securing shipping space for the export of the best

apples, and another reason concerns the enormous additional cost of all accessories. The cost of labour, too, has gone up very considerably. In view of the fact that evaporation is a new phase of the fruit-growing industry, Parliament should give it every possible encouragement. Even if the orchardists' disabilities were to become no more severe than during the past few years, he would have enough to do to make both ends meet; but, unfortunately, his prospects have been made even less attractive within the past few days. There has been brought under my notice a new log which has been served upon the orchardists of Tasmania. I shall quote a few items to demonstrate the need for substantial encouragement by means of the Tariff.

Senator RUSSELL.—Surely the encouragement already given may be regarded as substantial!

Senator DUNCAN.—And industrial logs are never fully acceded to.

Senator PAYNE.—I have vivid recollections of a log, the rates of which have been imposed within the past twelve months, without any reduction, and which was made retrospective. The log just served upon the orchardists bears the signature of Mr. Grayndler, secretary of the Australian Workers' Union. The rate of wage set out for carters is £6 a week; for male or female packers, if sixteen years of age or over, £5 10s. a week; and, if under sixteen years, £4 5s. With respect to the process of evaporation, employees engaged in fruit-cutting and pitting are set down to receive a wage of £5 10s. a week for any male or female over sixteen years of age, and £4 5s. per week for those under sixteen. I consider that the suggestion of Senator Earle may be reasonably accepted.

Senator PRATTEN.—But there is a duty at present of 3d. per lb.

Senator PAYNE.—That, as Senator Earle has pointed out, is not proportionate to the value of the commodity. It takes 8 to 10 lbs. of ordinary apples to produce 1 lb. of evaporated apples.

Senator RUSSELL.—My information is to the effect that the proportion is as three to one.

Senator PAYNE.—That estimate is too low. Five lbs. of evaporated apples equal one case of green apples. Other

lines of dried fruits possess a much higher value per lb. when placed on the market, and that is why Senator Earle has suggested a slightly higher rate of duty upon dried apples. He reasonably contends that the Protection for which he is asking is only equal to that which has been afforded under the Tariff in connexion with other varieties of dried fruit.

Senator SENIOR (South Australia) [3.19].—Some of the difficulties of orchardists have been already mentioned. There is this consideration to be added, namely, that the further the fruit-grower lives from his local market, the more waste there is. The waste fruit must be made use of in some way, if possible, and the only means is by desiccation or drying. Some people, unacquainted with fruit-growing, regard the windfall as utter waste. The apple tree does not bloom all over at the same time. The earliest blossoms provide the first ripe fruit. These are usually the largest apples, and, very often, before the main crop is ripe these large apples fall. Orchardists situated many hundreds of miles away from an ordinary market should have a means of profitably disposing of their product instead of offering it for sale at whatever may be offered. In a number of districts returned soldiers are engaged in fruit-growing, and unless they can dispose of the fruit that is not saleable in the ordinary way considerable hardship and loss will be incurred. The only opportunity orchardists have of disposing of the fruit which is otherwise unsaleable is by drying it. At certain periods of the year dried fruits arrive from overseas and compete with that placed on the market by the local growers; and it is for that reason I intend to support the request, in an endeavour to assist orchardists. During recent years, conditions have altered considerably, as the cost of labour, as well as the price of implements and materials used in drying fruit, have considerably increased. Those engaged in agricultural pursuits know that bluestone, which is used for pickling wheat, and which is also used by orchardists in spraying, has almost trebled in price during recent years. The cost of nitrate of soda, potash, and superphosphate is also much higher than it was a few years ago. If the orchardists

are to carry on successfully they will have to be given every consideration and assistance in making their undertakings successful, and by supporting the request submitted by Senator Earle we shall be helping them.

Senator EARLE (Tasmania) [3.24].—I am pleased that my request has received such favorable consideration. Up to the present, the only note of discord has been sounded by the Vice-President of the Executive Council (Senator Russell), who inferred that only inferior apples were used for drying, and said that the duty I was suggesting represented 40 per cent. of the value of the goods.

Senator RUSSELL.—I did not say that the apples were inferior, but that the better class of apples were not used for drying.

Senator EARLE.—Not if there is a market, because it necessarily pays better to sell them in the ordinary way. In the process of evaporating or drying fruit about 90 per cent. of the weight is lost, and the grower receives only about 4 lbs. of dried fruit from each case of apples after they have been peeled, sliced, and cored. Dried apples have been selling at about 8d. or 9d. per lb., so it will be seen that the actual return, on the basis of 8d. per lb., after paying for labour, would be 2s. 8d. per case. I know of no other dried fruit consumed in Australia that is sold cheaper than evaporated apples, and the price does not provide a sufficient margin to those who are engaged in the industry. To show a fair return, the retail price should be at least 1s. 6d. per lb., instead of 8d. to 9d. per lb.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Is that the retail price?

Senator EARLE.—I have not the latest quotations, but the prices quoted are substantially correct.

Senator ROWELL.—That is for a common variety.

Senator EARLE.—Probably so. The fruit-growers are usually shareholders in drying companies, and if they receive a return of 9d. per lb. it is equal to about only 3s. per case after incurring all the expense of drying. I cannot conceive of any commodity which deserves more protection than this one.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [3.27].—I intend to approach the consideration of this matter with a certain amount of sympathy, because I realize the difficulties with which the fruit-growers have to contend. But if the Committee, in its wisdom, is going to increase the duty on evaporated apples by 1d. per lb., we shall be in an illogical position in regard to other dried fruits. Currants, raisins, and sultanas, which are small fruits, are dutiable to the extent of 3d. per lb., and in another place a separate sub-item has been inserted under which prunes are dutiable at 4d. per lb. In the course of my varied experiences, I have been interested in apple drying, and there is no doubt that apples that cannot be sold as fresh fruit are used for drying purposes. In America and in Canada the best fruit is marketed for ordinary consumption, and the balance is saved by drying. If a grower receives 2s., 2s. 6d., or 3s. per case for the inferior portion of his crop, that is a saving, because, until the evaporating or drying industry was established under a fairly high Tariff, inferior apples were usually wasted. Senator Payne has said that it requires 9 or 10 lbs. of apples to produce 1 lb. of dried fruit, and those figures may be accepted as approximately correct. Another phase of the question which has to be considered is that there is about 1d. per lb. duty on fresh apples, and, to be consistent, there should be a duty of more than 3d. per lb. on dried apples.

Senator WILSON.—It is about three to one.

Senator EARLE.—One is more easily imported than the other.

Senator PRATTEN.—That is so. Senator Earle has moved to increase the duty on dried apples, and Senator Cox to increase the duty on dried summer fruits, such as peaches, apricots, pears, and nectarines. I cannot possibly vote for an increase of these duties if the duty on currants and raisins is to remain as it is. To do so would be most illogical. Later on we may have some one proposing an increase in the duty on preserved ginger by 1d. per lb. If these separate articles are dealt with in the way proposed, the Tariff on dried fruits generally will be a most illogical one. I

suggest that we should have a test division to decide whether the item shall remain as it is, or whether there shall be a rise of 1d. per lb. all round on these dried fruits.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [3.33].—If the request made by Senator Earle is carried in the amended form suggested by Senator Cox, the result will be a very substantial increase in the duties at present proposed. I would point out to both these honorable senators that by increasing these duties by 33 per cent., as they propose, they will be penalizing, not the people of the cities, who are able to obtain fresh fruit, but people outside, who require these commodities to vary a diet which is by no means palatable. On the question of values, I find from today's *Argus* that the wholesale price of dried apples is 9½d. per lb., and where the article is put up in boxes it is 1s. per lb. I find, from earlier files of the same newspaper, that the price of currants c.r. is 9½d. per lb., and that of a special variety a little more. The price of sultanas is a little higher.

Senator PAYNE.—What does the honorable senator mean by that?

Senator LYNCH.—The price of sultanas runs up to 11½d. per lb. The range of prices for dried apples runs from 9½d. to 1s. per lb., and the range of prices for currants and raisins is about the same. The proposed increase of the duties on these dried fruits is unfair to people in outside districts, who have to depend on dried fruits to vary a diet which is well below the standard of that enjoyed by people living in our cities.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [3.36].—I am rather sorry that Senator Cox should have submitted his amendment to the request moved by Senator Earle, because the fruit districts of New South Wales can turn out an article so superior that it can beat competition from anywhere. There is no question at all about that. The preserved fruits produced in New South Wales, particularly at Yanco—and I refer now not merely to dried fruits, but to canned fruits as well—represent the high-water mark of excellence in production. Their market is rapidly becoming the market of the world.

Senator GUTHRIE.—How much have the New South Wales Government lost already on the Yanco settlement?

Senator GARDINER.—The honorable senator refers to the millions put into the water scheme, and he would charge that expenditure against the Yanco settlement as overhead charges for two years. I have no hesitation in saying that it represents the richest investment that New South Wales has yet made.

Senator LYNCH.—Is not the expenditure more than covered by the additional value added to the land.

Senator GARDINER.—I believe that the value added to the land exceeds the cost of the construction of the dam. I may inform honorable senators that it is within my own knowledge that Yanco canned peaches—and I refer to this as an illustration, because other articles produced at Yanco are equally good—are so much in demand that some little time ago speculators went round, even to small grocery shops in Sydney, and purchased, at an advance of 3d. per tin, every tin of Yanco preserved peaches they could secure, in order to market them outside Australia.

Senator SENIOR.—That was because tin containers were scarce.

Senator GARDINER.—It was because the article was so superior to that turned out by private enterprise that it could beat competition from any other part of the world. Sydney grocers were retailing these preserved peaches at 11½d. per tin, and they were purchased by speculators at 14d. per tin for sale outside Australia in competition in the world's markets. New South Wales producers of these goods do not need any of these sham helps. I do not desire to see the products of New South Wales dragged down to the level of those that require protection from the Tariff. The State I represent does not require additional taxation on these kinds of fruit. Fruit is dried in New South Wales by the most advanced and up-to-date processes, and the products can more than hold their own with those produced in any other country of the world. And whom shall we handicap but the families living out-back? The people who live a long way from the markets and to whom the growers do not send fresh fruits are the

biggest consumers of dried and tinned fruits. If we increase these duties we shall make their conditions of living a little harder than they are. I protest against New South Wales being listed amongst those States which want to be assisted by the rest of Australia.

Senator RUSSELL.—Is the honorable senator aware that we imported in 1918-19 19,909 lbs. of currants, 28,818 lbs. of raisins, 1,167,000 lbs. of dates, and 590,485 lbs. of other fruits?

Senator GARDINER.—For how long will a Protective duty be required to prevent the importation of dates? The Protectionist idea seems to be to stop trade. The date is a good food.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—I permitted the Minister to make a passing allusion to other fruits, but I ask the honorable senator not to discuss dates on this item.

Senator GARDINER.—I am merely referring to other products similar to the item under consideration. There is not much difference between dried apples and dates. The Minister might as well have supported his argument by quoting the fruit we have exported during the last twelve months. We have entered into competition with fruit-growers on the other side of the world. Tasmanian apples have a world-wide reputation, but New South Wales grows better fruit. The apples produced at Bathurst and Orange are superior to any grown in any other part of the Commonwealth, and they are so much in demand that they never get beyond Sydney Harbor. Our fruits are holding their own in all parts of the world, and we desire to develop trade with other countries, not to cut it off. We cannot expect Britain and America to buy our apples unless we buy goods from them. Some people are afraid that American dried apples may force ours off the market. I could quote a circular by fruit-growers pointing out that a duty on citrus fruits is of no help to apple-growers. They require the duty taken off the implements which they use for growing their apples, and the materials with which they combat the pests. The codlin moth and other pests are nothing in comparison with what this Tariff will be. It will drive people off the land, because there is no remedy for

it. The codlin moth can be destroyed by spraying, and the grower can take precautions against aphids, but I know of no remedy for the Tariff unless it be the eradication of the Government responsible for it. The independent fruit-growers of New South Wales, who bring their intelligence to bear upon their industry, are not asking for the support of the rest of Australia.

Senator EARLE.—Did they commission the honorable senator to say that?

Senator GARDINER.—The people of New South Wales have commissioned me to say that by the large number of votes they recorded for me, well knowing my fiscal views. I therefore claim that I am commissioned by the people to say what I am saying. This pandering to two or three apple-growers in the hope of placating them is not common sense.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [3.45].—The remarks of Senator Gardiner in regard to New South Wales fruit-growers, if taken at their face value, might prove extremely dangerous to the fruit-growing industry. He has referred to the fact that twelve or eighteen months ago speculators were buying up canned fruit for export to London. Not only was fruit canned by the Government being bought up, but also the fruit canned by everybody else, because the prices in London were so abnormally high that the speculator could make a profit by buying up the Australian supplies and shipping them to London. Another point is that the canning of fruit by Government enterprise at Yanco has resulted in a huge loss that is computed at six figures. And there are 4,000,000 tins of canned fruit in the Government cannery at Yanco for which no sale can be found, either in Australia or abroad. With the imminent possibility of a return to pre-war conditions in regard to dried fruit, with Greece again coming into the market and the American surplus available for export to Australia, our fruit industry, without adequate duties upon fruits of all sorts, will be in a very much worse position than it is to-day, and goodness knows it is bad enough. The canneries are stocked with goods that they cannot sell, and the Government have given advances that may never be realized. In order to give protection to the fruit-growing industry and fair play to the

growers, I would prevent even a pound of fruit being imported. Senator Crawford put the position very well last night when he said that there was an over-production of fruit in Australia. I, therefore, refute the argument of Senator Gardiner, that New South Wales, by virtue of her development in fruit production, is able to compete with the world without Tariff assistance.

Senator GARDINER.—When the honorable senator stands for the Parramatta seat I shall fight him on that point.

Senator PRATTEN.—I do not wish to fight anybody, but "thrice armed is he who hath his quarrel just," and the fruit-growers of Parramatta will have something to say about the honorable senator's attitude. The statement that an industry such as that at Yanco can exist without any protection at all is dangerous talk. It is admitted throughout Australia that the fine developments at Mildura and Renmark would not have been possible without adequate duties on imported dried fruits, and that those enterprises without Protection would have been smothered by "Greek competition before the war. To return to the case put up by Senator Earle for an additional duty of 1d. per lb. on dried apples, and the further proposal by Senator Cox that an additional duty of 1d. per lb. be imposed upon dried apricots, peaches, and nectarines in the interest of the Yanco fruit-growers, I would point out that if such a request were agreed to, it would mean that currants, sultanas, and raisins, the preparation of which involves probably far more labour, would be dutiable at a lower rate. In order to test the feeling of the Committee, I propose to move at the proper time that the duty on all dried fruits, including apples, peaches, pears, apricots, and ginger, be increased by 1d. per lb.

Senator SENIOR (South Australia) [3.52].—Senator Gardiner has said that Yanco is such a glorious district for fruit production that orchardists there can carry on without any Tariff assistance. I invite him to look back to the inception of Mildura and Renmark, and to remember what it cost the Government and the pioneers to establish those great settlements. If he does, he will be prepared to give more consideration to this request for an increased duty. The Minister

(Senator Russell) has said that a good many tons of currants and raisins are annually imported to Australia. We should look at the other side of the picture and ascertain how many tons of currants and raisins produced in Australia are annually sent to the distilleries. With such information in our possession we should know the exact position of the industry. In dealing with Senator Earle's request in an earlier speech, I pointed out that it was necessary to increase the duty in order to assist orchardists who are not within easy distance of the fresh fruit market. Fruit-growers within easy reach of any of our big cities have no difficulty in disposing of their fresh fruits at prices in excess of those obtained for dried fruits, despite the extra labour involved in the process of drying. I invite Senator Lynch to have regard to the position of fruit-growers 200 or 300 miles away from a big city. The only course open to them is to dry their fruits, and the prices at which dried fruits are obtainable offer them but a poor remuneration for their labour. Instead of making big profits, as has been suggested, the average orchardist, with his wife and children, is often engaged until late at night in cutting up fruit for drying next morning, and his return does not amount to more than 1d. per lb. Some of the arguments that have been advanced in opposition to this request are born of want of knowledge. We must have regard, not only to the consumers of these commodities, but to those who produce them. Let us hold the balance fairly between them. Considering the increased cost of production, this request for an additional duty of 1d. per lb. is by no means unreasonable. I would remind the Committee that the request is not for a duty of 1d. per lb. on green fruit, such as we were asked to agree to in respect of bananas, but for an additional impost, which is about equal to one-eighth of 1d. per lb. of fresh fruit.

Senator PRATTEN.—The total duty would not amount to more than $\frac{1}{8}$ d. per lb. on green fruit.

Senator SENIOR.—That is so. I received to-day a typical letter from an orchardist who has had to contend with many difficulties. He assures me that after keeping his fruit in the cool stores for some time last year the price that he

obtained for it on the market was not sufficient to pay for the cost of storage.

Senator RUSSELL.—No man is compelled to hold his fruit until the bottom falls out of the market.

Senator SENIOR.—Quite so; but directly the market is favorable it is flooded with imports. I hope the request will be agreed to.

Senator GUTHRIE (Victoria) [3.59].—I intend to support a request for an increased duty of 1d. per lb. on dried fruits. I was astounded at the remarks made by Senator Gardiner regarding the condition of the dried-fruit industry in the Murrumbidgee irrigation area. We all know that the industry there up to date shows a colossal loss, not only to the Government, but to those who have been directly engaged in it. A magnificent example of the value of the dried-fruit industry is furnished by Mildura, which has been converted from what was practically a waste into one of the most prosperous and happy settlements I have visited. That would have been impossible but for a substantial Protective duty on dried fruits.

Senator SENIOR.—And substantial Government help.

Senator GUTHRIE.—And also substantial assistance from the Government. Surely it should be our object to retain to Australia the magnificent trade in dried fruits that has thus been built up. I do not know why we should import any dried fruit.

Senator ROWELL.—Mr. Chaffey says it would be a grave mistake to increase the duty on currants and raisins.

Senator GUTHRIE.—I particularly wish to speak on the subject of ginger. Ten years ago an improved process was discovered.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—The honorable senator may discuss the subject of ginger afterwards, but not on this item.

Senator GUTHRIE.—I understand that ginger is dealt with in 53A.

The CHAIRMAN.—That is so; but the request before the Chair relates to a new sub-item D. The honorable senator will not be precluded from discussing ginger later on.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [4.0].—Before coming to a decision on

the question before us we ought to inform our minds as to the facts. It has been said that there is a large stock of tinned fruits at Yanco for which there is no sale. On referring to the official statistics issued by the Department of Trade and Customs, showing the Customs and Excise revenue for 1919-20, we find that the value of the imports of fruits preserved in liquid—that is, tinned fruits—for the five years beginning 1915-16 has been, in round figures, as follows:—£50,000, £47,000, £42,000, £67,000, and £56,000. For the same period the exports have been £20,000, £122,000, £251,000, £477,000, and, last year, £529,000. We imported £50,000 worth, and the net result is that we exported over £500,000 worth; yet Senator Pratten tells us that there are stocks at Yanco for which a market cannot be found.

Senator RUSSELL.—There is, in addition, £1,370,000 worth of preserved fruits.

Senator LYNCH.—These are all facts which the Committee ought to know; instead of covering up the situation, we ought to get down to "tin tacks," and inform our minds as to the true position. Although last year there was exported over £500,000 worth of tinned fruits, an increased duty is asked for. In the case of dried fruits, the value of the imports of currants for the five years from 1915-16 was, in round figures, £17,000, £54, £5, £505, and, last year, £120, showing purely nominal importations. Raisins, over the same period, are represented by £46, £25, £11, £4, and, last year, £323.

Senator RUSSELL.—The honorable senator's figures are much lower than the figures I have.

Senator LYNCH.—I am quoting from the departmental statistics of the Customs and Excise revenue for the year 1919-20. I wish to see every industry in Australia get a fair deal; I do not desire to have any position bolstered up by mere fallacies. In the case of currants, the value of the exports over the same period was £25,000, £165,000, £134,000, £100,000, and, last year, £246,000, and in the case of raisins the value was £215,000, £166,000, £114,000, £95,000, and, last year, £359,000, while other dried fruits exported were valued at £3,000, £41,000, £17,000, £57,000, and £37,000. Yet a

duty of 3d. is asked for. Where are we drifting to? A suggestion is made that another 1d. should be added to the duty, and that apples should bear the extra impost. Dried apples are not set out in these returns, but we have the figures I have just quoted.) The statement made by Senator Pratten has nothing to sustain it as a fact, and the proposal before us simply means penalizing our home consumers for the benefit of foreign consumers.

Senator PAYNE (Tasmania) [4.8].—I regret that the request proposed by Senator Earle has been beclouded to a great extent by some of those who have taken part in the discussion. The figures quoted by Senator Lynch are interesting and reliable, but they have no bearing on the request proposed by Senator Earle—they have no bearing at all on the request that the evaporated or dried apple industry should have a fair and reasonable measure of protection. Senator Lynch has quoted the export figures of raisins, currants, and other dried fruits; but I have never yet heard that the people interested in the production of such fruits have made any request for an increase in the duties. On the contrary, I was given to understand at Mildura that the producers are perfectly satisfied with the protection which they have had for some time, and which was given in order to encourage the cultivation of such fruit at Mildura and elsewhere. The industry, under the present protection, has been very successful; but this is an entirely different industry from that referred to by Senator Earle. The dried apple industry is quite a new one in Australia, brought into existence owing to the fact that it was found impossible to insure the necessary space for the export of our better-class fruit to the Home Land.

Senator CRAWFORD.—When was the industry established?

Senator PAYNE.—Only within the last three or four years has it been established to any extent.

Senator CRAWFORD.—What!

Senator RUSSELL.—It was established owing to the fact that the British Government bought 40,000 tons of such produce because they could not get refrigerated space.

Senator PAYNE.—Of course, time flies very rapidly, but it is only within quite recent years that the industry has at all developed. Those engaged in apple growing have been forced to devise means for getting some return for that part of the crop which they cannot market as fresh fruit. The drying and evaporating of apples is an industry which is in a different category from the currant and raisin industry. When primary producers find that they cannot make a profit, they are justified in asking for more protection, and it is not usual for successful producers to ask for an increase of duty. Australia supplies her own demand for currants and raisins, and her exportation of these fruits is increasing; but I do not under normal conditions anticipate any great exportation of dried and evaporated apples. During the war foodstuffs found a ready market, because the people of so many countries were then forced to concentrate their energies upon warfare, but to-day the position has changed. Nevertheless, the drying and evaporating of apples is an industry which is helpful to the growers of that fruit, whose difficulties seem to increase every year, and we should do what we can to improve their condition. In Tasmania orcharding and the growing of small fruits has been for some years a very important industry. If the returns could be analyzed, Senator Lynch would find that there has been but a small exportation of dried apples, and I believe that to-day there is no export trade in them.

Senator Cox.—What other dried fruits would be exported?

Senator EARLE.—Dried pears, peaches, and apricots.

Senator PAYNE.—I am confining my remarks to the dried apple industry, and, in my opinion, there is no similarity between it and the dried-fruits industry referred to by Senator Lynch.

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [4.15].—Yesterday, when I spoke briefly in favour of Senator Earle's proposal, I was under the impression that the price of dried apples was very much less than it appears to be according to the quotations in to-day's newspapers. But I am desirous that something should be done to assist the fruit industry generally, because there are indications that in practically every State there is even now over-production.

Senator GARDINER.—Are you not sure that the trouble is under-consumption? We have enough people to eat all you can grow.

Senator CRAWFORD.—If they would live on fruit exclusively. I do not know how a greater *per capita* consumption of fruit could be brought about in this country. But there is room in this country for many millions more than we have here, and if we had the population that we might and should have, there would be no difficulty in disposing of all the fruit grown. However, unless the policy of the State Governments changes, the production of fruit is likely to increase, rather than to diminish, in proportion to population. Not only is there a larger area under fruit to-day than there was some years ago, but the area is greater than it was in proportion to the population. Therefore, it is necessary to prevent the importation of all fruit while the position remains as it is. I understand that our factories not only hold very large stocks of jam and preserved fruit, but also that they have no less than 17,000 tons of pulped fruit, and that so depressed is the market abroad that if they could get sugar for nothing they could not at present find a sale for their goods. Apparently, at present the only market abroad for our surplus fruit is that which takes 1,500,000 cases of apples during one season of the year, and I have been informed on good authority that the trade cannot be increased unless growers will accept much lower prices, because there are not enough people in Great Britain—where most of our apples go—with sufficient means to buy apples at what are now considered by our exporters to be profitable prices. I accept Senator Earle's statement that there is not likely to be a combination to keep up the price of dried apples; but undoubtedly the Australian Dried Fruits Association has kept up the price of currants, raisins, and similar dried fruits. Before the war, the Association used to decide what quantity of dried fruits should be exported, and the fruit was sold abroad for about one-third of the price charged for that sold in Australia. I should not like that to be done with the fruits now under consideration. The fruit industry in America is at present very depressed, and in a letter which I received some time ago

from Sir Henry Jones he says that, bad as things are in Australia, they are evidently, from cabled reports, very much worse in America, where, from latest advices, canned fruits are selling at 2s. per dozen for standard quality.

Senator JOHN D. MILLEN.—And they cost 10s. to produce.

Senator CRAWFORD.—I am sure that the containers would cost more than the price mentioned in the letter. Therefore, there is a danger of dumping, and I think that that could be met better by special anti-dumping legislation than by an increase of the duties. If the American situation has been truly represented, I do not think that a duty of 4d. per lb. would keep out imports, and it may be necessary for the Government to absolutely prohibit importation.

Senator LYNCH.—Do not you think that we can hold our own against America in the production of fruit?

Senator CRAWFORD.—I dare say that we can; but the Americans may do what the Mildura growers have done: make their profit on their local sales and dump the balance into other countries, including Australia.

Senator SENIOR.—At present, the surplus fruit is being dumped into the distilleries.

Senator CRAWFORD.—I understand that a large quantity of apples are used in the making of cider, and perhaps that industry could be extended. Queenslanders are reputed to be thirsty souls, but cider is a beverage which is rarely seen in their State. I do not think that we can pay regard to the circumstances of the fruit industry during the war and immediately afterwards, because there was then a big demand for fruit owing to the purchases of this and the Imperial Government, and we were then getting sugar more cheaply than it could be obtained in any other country. Now conditions have changed. The industry has not the special advantages that it enjoyed during the war, and the production of fruit has increased. Even if another tree or vine were not planted, the production of fruit in Australia would continue to increase for some years. I was a member of a party which in November last visited the Murray River settlements, and although I have a fairly

wide knowledge of the rural districts of Australia I never before saw evidence of such general affluence in any locality. But what impressed me most was the fact that, both in Victoria and in South Australia, extensive areas were being prepared for planting. I do not know where a market will be found for the fruit that will be grown there.

Senator GUTHRIE.—Fruit is too cheap for the grower, and too dear for the consumer.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Better organization might get rid of some of the middlemen. Orchard fruit is generally grown within a reasonable distance of large centres of population. From Mildura it can be landed in Melbourne within twenty-four hours. There is no question of a three-days' train journey, as is the case with consignments of Queensland bananas.

Senator GUTHRIE.—In the soldier settlements in the north-east of Victoria last year it did not pay the orchardists to pick their peaches.

Senator CRAWFORD.—I have been informed that, in one fruit-growing area in New South Wales, last season 200,000 cases of peaches ripened within a fortnight, and that, three years hence, it is expected that 1,000,000 cases of peaches of the same variety will ripen within ten to fourteen days.

Senator PRATTEN.—I think there is something wrong with those figures.

Senator CRAWFORD.—They were given me by a member of the Government. Altogether, the situation with respect to the fruit-growing industry is so difficult that I cannot see how it is to be eased simply by the imposition of a duty of 4d. per lb. More returned soldiers have gone out on the land to cultivate orchards than in respect of any other phase of primary industry. Thus, the matter becomes one which must engage the serious attention of Commonwealth and State Governments.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [4.28].—I desire, at the proper stage, to request the inclusion of a new sub-item having for its purpose the free admission of bananas and other fruit and products from Papua and Territories held under the mandates.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—The honorable senator may not move in the direction indicated, or debate the subject, at the present stage.

Senator GARDINER.—That being so, I shall devote brief attention to the viewpoint of Senator Pratten with respect to the fruit-growing industry. I admit that the honorable senator is a superior authority, compared with myself, seeing that he has handled primary producers and their products so effectively and well, in his own interests, as to be able to devote himself to the hobby of politics.

Senator PRATTEN.—Fruits were not the sole source of my activities. Had they been, I would not now be in the happy position which Senator Gardiner depicts.

Senator GARDINER.—Senator Pratten, I repeat, is a superior authority, having legitimately laid the basis of his ample competence upon the toil and the product of the struggling fruit-growers. To-day he has comfortable leisure in which to devote himself, with that same great intelligence that made his fortune, to the legislation of the Commonwealth. I should add, as further tribute to the honorable senator's talents, that he not only made his profits out of fruit and fruit-growers, but also out of the tin in which the fruits were canned. But fruit-growing, and particularly fruit-drying, has developed considerably in New South Wales since Senator Pratten was in the business. The introduction of up-to-date machinery and the intelligent employment of modern methods in the industry may now be expected to do far more for orchardists than all the protection given them under a sympathetic Tariff. In effect, the Government, when they impose high Protection, are giving a bonus to "go-slow" producers. The Government say, in effect, "Go as slowly as you like. You need be afraid of no competition. We shall keep everybody else out." But Senator Earle is not satisfied. He wants to provide that fruit-growers may go still more slowly. I know, of course, that Tasmania is famous for its apples.

Senator EARLE.—Apples are also grown in Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia.

Senator GARDINER.—Tasmania has to be famous for something. Hence I mention apples. It is famed, also, for one

other thing, namely, its superb climate; and it is curious that the two most favoured States in this respect, namely, Queensland and Tasmania, should be seeking the greatest measure of coddling protection for their products. The duties, as they now appear in the schedule in connexion with fruit, might well remain. The Government have already afforded sufficient encouragement to assist producers of dried apples to conduct their businesses profitably at the expense of the remainder of the community. If Senator Earle has his way, the dried-apple producer will be given an additional 1d. per lb. at the cost of the great mass of consumers. The honorable senator claims that unless this extra penny be conceded, the orchardists will be unable to carry on. What will they do with the extra penny? Will they pay higher wages, or sell their product more cheaply? Senator Pratten referred to the splendid market which the Mother Country provided after the war, and he remarked that it was because Great Britain wanted so much of our fruits that Yanco secured such opportunities for development. In opposition to that view, some folk claim that the activities of a certain Combine must be taken into considerable account. Naturally, of course, upon the subject of the actual working of Combines, Senator Pratten is again much better informed than myself.

Senator PRATTEN.—So well informed, in this instance, as to be able to say that the honorable senator is incorrect in his innuendo.

Senator GARDINER.—The fact of Senator Pratten saying so does not make me incorrect.

Senator PRATTEN.—Is the honorable senator aware that Yanco fruits have not been sold "outside" during the past three years?

Senator GARDINER.—I am aware that a certain Combine bought Yanco fruits for 1s. 2d. which were being retailed at 11½d. per tin, and that the wholesale price immediately rose, in New South Wales, to 1s. 5d.

Senator PRATTEN.—That is not correct.

Senator GARDINER.—I can prove it by reference to specific market quotations. Who will reap the benefit if the duty

under review is increased? The orchardist must fight against pests, and plagues, and storms. He has my sympathy. If I thought that he would benefit, I would support the request of Senator Earle. But the man who would gain is the man who controls the product. I refer to the party who has the brains to outwit the fruit-grower—the type of man who so successfully outwits the fruit-grower as to be able to retire and cultivate the hobby of Federal politics. Everybody knows that fruit rapidly depreciates in hot weather. When fruit is marketed during a hot spell, the gentlemen, who are able eventually to retire after a lifetime of outwitting the fruit-grower, refrain from bidding, and—there being a Combine—nobody else bids. When the market can no longer hold out, owing to rapid deterioration, the brainy orchardist controllers buy the fruit for less than one-tenth of its value, and turn it into jams and preserves. They astutely bid just when the growers are compelled to sell or to throw their product into the tip. The proposal now before the Committee is to give these intelligent persons who live on the orchardists and their products a little more lining to their pockets. In conclusion, I may add that I am making this personal attack on Senator Pratten in the hope that he will be provoked to go a little further into the subject generally. Inevitably, he looks upon it from a view-point which is the opposite of mine. I bring to bear the point of view of the pest-battling orchardist, while the honorable senator takes that of the gentleman who gives the orders to the Combine, who issues directions when to buy and how long to hold off.

Question.—That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted (Senator Cox's amendment upon Senator EARLE's request)—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	13
Noes	9

Majority	4
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AYES.

Bakhap, T. J. K.	Plain, W.
Benn., B.	Pratten, H. E.
Buzacott, R.	Reid, M.
Cox, C. F.	Rowell, J.
Glasgow, Sir Thomas	Senior, W.
Guthrie, J. F.	Teller:
Lynch, P. J.	Crawford, T. W.

NOES.

Drake-Brockman, E. A.	Payne, H. J. M.
Earle, J.	Pearce, G. F.
Gardiner, A.	Russell, E. J.
Henderson, G.	<i>Teller:</i>
Millen, John D.	de Largie, H.

PAIR.

Keating, J. H.	Fairbairn, G.
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Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Amendment agreed to.

Question—That the request (Senator EARLE'S), as amended, be agreed to—put.
The Committee divided.

Ayes	14
Noes	9

Majority	5
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AYES.

Bakhap, T. J. K.	Millen, John D.
Benny, B.	Payne, H. J. M.
Cox, C. F.	Plain, W.
Crawford, T. W.	Pratten, H. E.
Duncan, W. L.	Reid, M.
Earle, J.	
Glasgow, Sir Thomas	<i>Teller:</i>
Guthrie, J. F.	Senior, W.

NOES.

Buzacott, R.	Pearce, G. F.
Drake-Brockman, E. A.	Rowell, J.
Gardiner, A.	Russell, E. J.
Henderson, G.	<i>Teller:</i>
Lynch, P. J.	de Largie, H.

PAIR.

Keating, J. H.	Fairbairn, G.
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Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Request, as amended, agreed to.

Senator GUTHRIE (Victoria) [4.52].
—I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make the duty on ginger, per lb., 4d. About ten years ago an important discovery was made in Australia in connexion with preserving ginger, which enabled the Australian manufacturers and preservers to capture the trade which was previously held almost entirely by China, and as a result of which practically 90 per cent. of the trade was diverted to Australia. During recent years, Chinese manufacturers have been offering this product in the Commonwealth at a price lower than that at which it can be produced here, because they have been able to secure sugar from Java at a cheaper price than Australian manufacturers and preservers have been able to purchase in the Commonwealth. It was thought by the Customs authorities that that difficulty would be overcome by supplying sugar to manufacturers and

preservers here at a lower rate, but the authorities refused to do so. The only way to save the industry and allow ginger to be preserved by white labour instead of by yellow labour is to give it adequate protection. I submit the request, and trust that it will have the support of the Committee.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [4.54].—If the Vice-President of the Executive Council (Senator Russell) is prepared to accept a further amendment to increase the duties generally on all dried fruits from 3d. to 4d. per lb. it will be in consonance with the vote that has just been taken, and will also include the request submitted by Senator Guthrie.

Senator GUTHRIE.—I am not in favour of dates being dutiable at that rate.

Senator PRATTEN.—I am referring to sub-item A.

Senator RUSSELL.—The duties are too low in some cases.

Senator PRATTEN.—On currants, raisins, and sultanas the duty is 3d., and on apples, peaches, pears, and nectarines it is 4d. per lb. Senator Guthrie wishes preserved ginger to be dutiable at 4d. per lb., and perhaps the Minister will accept a general request on the lines I have indicated.

Senator RUSSELL.—I want more than 4d. in some cases.

Senator PRATTEN.—Perhaps the Minister is referring to prunes; but I am dealing only with the commodities mentioned in sub-item A. I indicated that I would move for a general increase from 3d. to 4d. per lb., and partial approval has been given to that suggestion by the Committee, but a further increase is desired by Senator Guthrie, and it would simplify the position if the Minister would agree to my suggestion.

Senator GUTHRIE.—I am sorry I cannot support the honorable senator's suggestion, because I understand that it is not necessary that any further protection should be granted for currants and raisins.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [4.56].—I am prepared to agree to Senator Guthrie's request. It is recognised that the position, so far as ginger is concerned, has been changed, owing largely to the fact that a higher price has to be paid for sugar in Australia than in

China. We did what we could to get cheaper sugar for this industry in Australia, and failed. This means that this industry must collapse unless the duty is increased by at least 1d. per lb.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Is there any such industry now in Australia?

Senator RUSSELL.—Yes, but its existence is seriously threatened because those engaged in the industry in China are able to obtain sugar more cheaply than it can be obtained in Australia. Those concerned in the industry here do not ask for an increase in the duty of more than 1d. per lb., and there is no reason why we should give manufacturers more than they ask for under the Tariff.

Senator GARDINER.—I wish to raise a point of order. The Committee has just carried a request for the insertion of a sub-item at the close of the item now under discussion. Ginger is covered by sub-items A or B, and to accept the request moved by Senator Guthrie involves the amendment of a part of the item prior to that with which we have already dealt. I remind you, sir, that if, in the consideration of a clause of a Bill, an amendment is made in it, it is not competent for an honorable senator subsequently to propose an amendment of a previous part of the clause. Senator Guthrie proposes that we should go back in the consideration of this item, and I raise the point of order whether, in the circumstances, his request can be accepted.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—I think that Senator Gardiner was not present when the request moved by Senator Earle was submitted to the Committee. In the circumstances, it was necessary that sub-item A of item 53 should be dealt with as Senator Earle proposed. It was clearly understood, and, in fact, I stated the matter in so many words, that by adopting the course then proposed subsequent discussion upon sub-item A would not be shut out. Senator Earle's request had reference to sub-item A, and had to be dealt with in the form of a request to the House of Representatives to amend the item so as to include a sub-item D. I indicated at the time that, as sub-item A was clearly referred to in Senator Earle's request, it would, after that request had been dealt with, be still within the competency of the Committee

to discuss that sub-item. The honorable senator's point of order, therefore, cannot be sustained.

Question—That the request (Senator GUTHRIE's) be agreed to—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	16
Noes	6

Majority	10
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AYES.

Benny, B.	Plain, W.
Cox, C. F.	Pratten, H. E.
Crawford, T. W.	Reid, M.
de Largie, H.	Rowell, J.
Glasgow, Sir Thomas	Russell, E. J.
Guthrie, J. F.	Senior, W.
Millen, John D.	
Payne, H. J. M.	Teller:
Pearce, G. F.	Duncan, W. L.

NOES.

Drake-Brockman, E. A.	Lynch, P. J.
Earle, J.	
Gardiner, A.	Teller:
Henderson, G.	Buzacott, R.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Request agreed to.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [5.0].—I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to insert after sub-item (A) the words—

Desiccated banana, banana flour, and peel, candied, drained, or dried, coming from Papua or the Mandated Territories—Free.

I think that this is quite necessary, because huge islands in the Pacific have been intrusted to us for government. I do not know whether the articles referred to in my request are produced in these islands, but I know that they do produce bananas, and having been intrusted with the government of these Territories, it is our duty to govern them intelligently. If we have a Tariff operating against them, it will be an argument why we should not retain the government of those Territories. It has not yet been officially settled, and may not be for years, that we shall continue to govern and practically keep these islands. The decision may hang in the balance with the League of Nations for years to come. I am particularly anxious not to give the people of other nations an opportunity of saying that we have governed the Mandated Territories in such a way as to treat them as though they were foreign countries. There

can be no danger to Australia in admitting free the products of these territories which for some time will cost us so much to govern. Of course, there will be the objection of the man who objects to using the products of black labour. I have no objection to using the products of black labour countries. Silks produced by Eastern nations adorn the people who wear them just as well as if they were produced by white labour. I venture to hold the opinion that the White Australia policy does not prohibit trading with coloured people. The object of the policy is to maintain the population of this country white by keeping outside the borders of the Commonwealth the people of coloured races, not because we consider them inferior, but because experience teaches that they cannot be assimilated with our population, and cannot become a people similar to the British people. The League of Nations has laid it down that those who are given mandates over these islands must treat their people as they desire. For instance, in the matter of religion, the missionaries of every nation are to be permitted to enter the islands to put their religious views before the people without interference. The management of these Mandated Territories might come up for consideration at a Congress representative of the nations of the world, in which, by the way, it is quite possible that representatives of coloured races might predominate. At that Congress it might be said that Australia stretched out her hands to secure control over these islands to hold them against the rest of the world, had then prevented other people trading with them, and at the same time imposed a Tariff upon their products entering Australia. This Tariff, so far as these islands are concerned, will operate against Japan and other countries, and, at the same time, will levy duties on the products of our own Mandated Territories. The sooner we settle down to treat these islands as though they were part and parcel of the great Australian Commonwealth, the better it will be for Australia.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Can we do that under the terms of the mandate?

Senator GARDINER.—We can go so far in that direction as our legislation will permit. We can put ourselves in a

position to say, "We regard these Territories as part and parcel of Australia." We should begin with that policy now. If we take the stand that we regard these Territories as foreign countries, inhabited by foreign people, with whom we are unwilling to trade, that may prove an excellent argument against our continuing to hold a mandate over them.

Senator CRAWFORD.—We have not taken that stand with regard to any country.

Senator GARDINER.—We have taken that stand with regard to Great Britain, so far as the importation of motors is concerned.

Senator RUSSELL.—Our proposal is to help the Territories; they can obtain revenue by taxing imports from Australia.

Senator GARDINER.—That is rather too rich. I can stand a good deal from the good-natured senator who is in charge of the Bill, but it is too much to have him suggest that by taxing the products of the Territories we shall be helping their development.

Senator RUSSELL.—These Territories can operate under this Tariff, and they can tax us in addition.

Senator GARDINER.—It is true that they may have some means of imposing taxation upon imports from Australia; but my point is that these huge, rich Territories have been committed to the care of the Australian Commonwealth. We realize that we cannot claim them as part of Australia, as we can claim Australia and Papua, but we should put ourselves in a position to be able to do so by trading with them as though they were part of the Commonwealth. If we adopt that course, it will be very difficult in a few years' time for any outside country to set up a dividing line between us. I desire by trade to link up these islands with Australia, so that they may ultimately become part and parcel of the Commonwealth.

Senator REID.—The Tariff does not put them beyond our control.

Senator GARDINER.—No; but under the Tariff we say that any one in Australia who wants to buy any of the articles referred to in the request I have moved, which may be produced in these islands, must first pay 3d. per lb. duty upon them. Under this Tariff we treat

the Mandated Territories in exactly the same way as we treat China, Japan, Greece, Italy, France, or any other country producing these goods. If we put the people living in the Islands which have been given to us to govern in the same position as the foreigner, we shall do an unwise thing. While these Mandates are still in a state of flux, let us treat these territories as if they were part of Australia, and it will then be much more difficult for the League of Nations to remove them from our control than it will be if we are treating them in the same way as we treat foreign countries.

Senator DUNCAN.—We cannot treat them wholly as part of Australia, because we cannot place their people upon the same footing as our own.

Senator GARDINER.—Certainly not. We cannot admit their citizens to residence in Australia, but we should be prepared to trade with them on terms of equality. Australia has made great sacrifices, and will yet make more to hold the Islands, and yet we are deliberately, by the Tariff, refusing to treat them as part of the Commonwealth.

Senator CRAWFORD.—If the honorable senator's proposal is carried out, the Commonwealth will not retain all of the States which it comprises at present.

Senator GARDINER.—The Constitution, which prevents differential treatment of citizens in any part of the Commonwealth, would make it most difficult for anybody to logically attempt to interfere with any of the States that at present constitute the Commonwealth.

Senator CRAWFORD.—But the honorable senator desires to interfere on illogical grounds.

Senator GARDINER.—If the representatives of other countries in the League of Nations, who are not Australian in sympathy and who think that we already hold more territory than we can use, find that we treat these Mandated Territories as if they do not belong to us, they will be quick to point out that this Federal Parliament is putting the Islands upon the same basis as that upon which it places foreign nations. I ask the Minister in charge of the Bill to accept the proposed request. It will not interfere with our own industries, which he is so anxious to build up at the expense of the

people. When we take millions of pounds out of the pockets of the people for the purpose of building up local industries, all we get from the persons whom we have thus helped is abuse and denunciation of the Australian working man. Therefore, I see no reason for increased Protection, but I see every reason why products from the Mandated Territories should be admitted free.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [5.15].—I ask Senator Gardiner not to press his request. Papua has its own distinct Tariff, and that has been the saving of the country. The Administration of Papua collects the Customs revenue, and by that means the Territory has been largely self-supporting, and has not had to make too great a call upon Australia for financial assistance. As soon as this Tariff is disposed of, the Government will consider the fiscal position in relation to the Islands. Personally, I feel inclined to allow Papua to continue to collect its own revenue and apply it to developmental purposes.

Senator GARDINER.—Who frames the Papuan Tariff?

Senator RUSSELL.—The Executive Council, which comprises certain Government officers and representatives of the citizens. The position in regard to late German New Guinea will require consideration from a different point of view. As Senator Gardiner has pointed out, we are desirous of making a good impression in regard to the Mandated Territories, because they are the cause of a good deal of jealousy. Although we have the right to apply our laws to them, our title at present is not quite conclusive; therefore, we should proceed warily. We have never placed any extreme imposts upon goods imported from Papua, but we have offered bonuses for certain products. However, Parliament will have the opportunity of considering, later, the whole position in regard to the Islands. The sooner this Tariff is disposed of the sooner we shall be able to deal with the other proposal in relation to trade with the Islands which have passed into our possession temporarily.

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [5.18].—It would be a very serious mistake for the Senate to attempt to settle

a matter of high public policy on any item of a Tariff schedule. I am just as anxious as is any one else for the development of the Mandated Territories; but Senator Gardiner's proposal is to admit duty free products that will compete with commodities raised in the tropical part of Australia. To be consistent, the honorable senator should propose that all commodities from the islands should be admitted free. I would not be in favour of that; but why should he suggest that two or three items which are raised in tropical Australia should be selected to compete on equal terms with the products of Mandated Territories in which there is an abundant supply of cheap labour? In those islands it is possible to produce, not only tropical fruits, but also citrus fruits, yet Senator Gardiner allowed the last-named item to pass without any suggestion that consideration should be given to the islands in respect of it. The islands can produce maize in great abundance, but I am certain that the Committee would not at this stage admit maize from the Mandated Territories free of duty, because the industrial conditions under which it is produced are so radically different from those existing in Australia. If we admit free of duty the commodities produced in cheap-labour countries, eventually our own industries will be swamped, and there will be no employment for our own people.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [5.21].—I did not earlier call attention to the necessity for more generous treatment of the Mandated Territories, because this is the first item upon which the matter came under my notice. I am prepared to allow maize to be imported from the Mandated Territories free of duty, because there are thousands of men on poultry farms who are paying twice as much for maize to-day as they paid ten years ago. The imposition of a duty on maize is crippling one primary industry.

Senator GUTHRIE.—Quite wrong.

Senator GARDINER.—Poultry raisers are to-day paying 5s. per bushel for maize; which, ten years ago, they could buy for 2s. per bushel.

Senator CRAWFORD.—In those days the agricultural labourer received £1 per week and "keep."

Senator GARDINER.—Senator Crawford's contention that a matter of high public policy that may affect Australia's future to an extent that none of us can imagine to-day should not be dealt with on an item of this schedule appeals to me. Moreover, the Minister has said that if the passage of this Tariff is not delayed too long, legislation in regard to the Mandated Territories will be introduced. That promise appeals to my reason, and I am prepared to withdraw my request. I realize that, in dealing with other nations, everything we do in this Parliament must be above suspicion, and incapable of misconstruction. If I were to call for a division upon this item, and it were shown that only half-a-dozen honorable senators were agreeable that Australia should trade unrestrictedly with the Mandated Territories, it would be a bad record to put into the hands of people who desired to prejudice Australia's claim to those territories.

Request, by leave, withdrawn.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [5.25].—Under sub-item A a duty of 3d. per lb. is imposed on currants, raisins, and other commodities. I realize that this is an intensely patriotic Committee—that honorable senators are willing to allow their wives' relations to die for Britain, and I propose to test the financial value of their loyalty by moving—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make sub-item (A), British, free.

If currants and raisins are not imported from Great Britain, the making of imports under the British preferential Tariff free will do no harm to the local industries. I should like, at this stage, to suggest that after the dinner adjournment we should deal with the Tariff page by page instead of item by item. If you, Mr. Chairman, put the question, "That the page as printed stand part of the Bill," honorable senators would still be free to discuss any item on the page under review, and to move such requests as might be thought desirable, while at the same time you, sir, would be relieved of the necessity of putting separately, perhaps, fifty items. In that way time would be saved. There is nothing new in this proposition. Sometimes a clause, or a schedule, in a Bill covers two or three pages, but the whole

clause or schedule is put as one proposition to the Committee. If the Committee decides to deal with the Tariff item by item, then I shall have to move in every case where a duty is imposed under the British preferential Tariff that the House of Representatives be requested to allow imports from Great Britain to come in free.

Senator PRATTEN.—The honorable senator is going to propose Free Trade with Britain?

Senator GARDINER.—Yes. If none of the commodities covered by sub-item A are produced in Great Britain, no harm will be done by making imports under the British preferential Tariff free. If, on the other hand, some of them are coming in from Great Britain, my request will test the financial value of the patriotism of honorable senators generally, since it means, as Senator Pratten says, Free Trade with Britain.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [5.29].—Although currants, raisins, and ginger may not be produced in Great Britain, they may be imported into Great Britain, and later on sent out here. We have very strict regulations dealing with the transshipment of goods in connexion with the preferential Tariff. The imposition of a duty under the British preferential Tariff forms a basis for negotiations with the various Dominions of the Empire for reciprocal trade relations. I, therefore, hope that the request will not be agreed to.

Request negatived.

Senator GUTHRIE (Victoria) [5.31].

—Under sub-item B a duty of 1d. per lb. is imposed on dates. Dates, which are a healthy food, are not produced here, and I fail to understand why a duty should be imposed on them.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Dates are produced in Queensland.

Senator Cox.—And also on the Darling near Bourke.

Senator GUTHRIE.—They may be grown there in very small quantities, but they are not preserved, and, that being so, we should remove the duty, since it tends only to raise unnecessarily the cost of a healthy food to the people. I therefore move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make sub-item (B) free.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [5.33].—I hope the Committee will not take it for granted that we cannot grow dates in Australia. Date palms do very well in various parts of the Commonwealth, and the duty of 1d. per lb. may serve as a little encouragement to people to preserve this fruit. Should an attempt be made in that direction, we can later on increase the duty. The point that I wish specially to impress on honorable senators is that dates come into competition with our own dried fruits. I recommend the Committee to reject the request.

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [5.35].—I cannot understand the attitude of some honorable senators towards tropical fruits. They seem to hold the view that tropical fruits should be admitted free, and that highly Protective duties should be imposed in respect of such fruits as are produced in the more temperate zones of Australia. The removal of the duty on dates would undermine the additional protection on dried fruits for which we have already decided to ask. The public will not pay a high price for raisins if they can obtain for half the price dates, which are just as palatable and as nutritious as many Australian preserved fruits.

Senator GARDINER.—In what part of Queensland are dates grown?

Senator CRAWFORD.—In the western part of the State. I admit, however, that they are not grown in commercial quantities. In the report of a scientific expedition which recently visited the central part of Australia, it is stated that in certain districts date palms were flourishing and bearing a prolific crop. This duty should be allowed to remain. Even with a duty of 1d. per lb., dates are not expensive. Surely honorable senators are not hostile to the production of tropical fruits in Australia. The western part of Queensland, the Northern Territory, and also, I believe, certain parts of Western Australia—notwithstanding the bad name for fruit production which has been given that State by some of its representatives in this Chamber—can produce all the dates required for Australian consumption?

Senator GUTHRIE.—Why do they not produce them?

Senator CRAWFORD.—Because of lack of Tariff encouragement. It would

be a good thing to increase the duty to 3d. per lb., but I know that it would be useless for me to move such a request.

Senator PAYNE (Tasmania) 5.40.—I do not intend to say one word on this proposal from the Protectionist point of view. The remarks made hitherto on the item have been not at all to the point; it is impossible to speak of protecting an industry in the present instance. No dates are grown commercially in the Commonwealth, and there is no proposal by the Government to increase the duty, which has been in existence since 1908 as a purely revenue duty.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN. — What about cotton piece goods, kerosene, and tea?

Senator PAYNE.—If the honorable senator will be patient, he will hear what I have to say when we reach those items.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I look forward to hearing the honorable senator.

Senator PAYNE.—I hope the honorable senator will have his anticipations realized.

Senator DRAKE-BROCKMAN.—I bet I shall!

Senator PAYNE.—We must regard this item from a common-sense point of view. The present duty produces a fair amount of revenue. Large quantities of dates are imported, but I do not see that the importations affect the consumption of other dried fruits in this country. Dates are regarded by the mass of the people as a dried fruit within their reach, and as of a totally different kind from any other fruit on the market. Dates at present are not exceptionally high in price, being somewhere about 5d. or 6d. per lb., though I have known them as low as 2d. However, I regard a duty as essential in the interests of the revenue, and, as such, I support it.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [5.42].—I am glad to hear the candid statement of Senator Payne that this is purely a revenue duty, because, as a fact, it is of no use trying to claim it as a Protective one. I have an idea that a date tree does not produce in this country under fifty or one hundred years. I got that idea when, as a little boy forty years ago, I was taken to an orchard some distance out of Parramatta, and there shown a date tree which had been planted by my grandmother nearly twenty years before,

and I was told that it would be seventy or a hundred years before any crop could be gathered.

Senator COX.—Was there only one tree?

Senator GARDINER.—Yes.

Senator COX.—Then it would be a good many hundred years before there was any crop! There are male and female trees.

Senator GARDINER.—That only helps my argument. A few years ago I met an uncle of mine, and asked him how this tree was getting on, and he told me that it had been supplanted by other trees, because it would be necessary to plant another date tree before any fruit could be expected. I am rather fond of Protectionists, because they are so delightfully idealistic! Imagine taxing the people of to-day on account of a crop which will be gathered a hundred years hence! Of course, I regard Queensland as rich enough to produce anything, in view of the fact that it has produced Senators Crawford, Reid, and Glasgow. I never refer to Queensland except in terms of admiration for its immense potentialities and possibilities; but Queensland cannot claim to produce dates to-day as a business proposition. It is claimed that this is a revenue duty; but from whom is the revenue taken? Principally from the people least able to pay it. I think that we could well come together and remove this duty; and then we might be able to proceed with the Tariff with proper celerity. The idea of protecting dates which our children's children will have to gather, is, truly, Protection long drawn out!

Senator COX (New South Wales) [5.45].—I have listened to this discussion with great interest. I happen to have been in the part of the world where dates are chiefly grown, and I understand from reliable people there that trees will bear in ten or twelve years at the very outside; in fact, I have seen the fruit growing on very small trees. Of course, dates are grown for commercial purposes in Egypt, Palestine, and the Sinai Desert, and they are a very valuable product. In that part of the world the tree has to be artificially fertilized.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Artificial fertilization is a common practice.

Senator COX. — Is that the practice adopted in Queensland?

Senator LYNCH.—Tell us something of the commercial aspect of the proposition.

Senator COX.—Senator Lynch has told us that in the tropical desert part of Western Australia bananas cannot be grown, and I advise him to plant a few date trees there, and have them fertilized, when he will soon see a fine industry develop.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [5.48].—This subject is not one to be lightly passed over, especially in view of the statement by Senator Gardiner and Senator Payne that this is a purely revenue duty. On the other hand, we have the high priest of Protection, Senator Crawford, saying that dates are grown in Queensland, although the honorable gentleman failed to give the name and address of a single grower. Apparently, we are struggling between two extremes; on the one side, it is claimed that this is a Protective duty, although, up to the present, the date industry has not had sufficient energy to be born.

Senator RUSSELL.—I think I saw the honorable senator voting against higher duties on all dried fruits, except apples; do not dates come into competition with apples?

Senator LYNCH.—The competition argument was threadbare long ago. As I say, Senator Crawford has not mentioned any place or given any particulars of where or how this industry is carried on in Queensland. Is it not plain that these dates are not grown in Queensland? The only place I ever saw date trees was along the North-South railway, at Oodnadatta, where the planting of them by the South Australian Government proved an absolute failure.

Senator CRAWFORD.—They are grown at Charlton, in Queensland.

Senator LYNCH.—This is only one of those revenue-producing items which keep Treasurers from launching out and raising revenue from people, and in quarters, where they should, instead of resorting to the lazy method of a Tariff. The present duty has been in operation for about eleven years, and has resulted in nothing. Notwithstanding all the Queensland inventive imagining, we have not been supplied with a single fact regarding the production of dates in that State; and yet Queensland representatives have the

audacity to ask for a duty in the case of an industry which, I repeat, has not had the energy to be born. That is asking too much, though pretty strong things have been asked for up to the present.

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [5.52].—I must take exception to the strong terms in which Senator Lynch has referred to the representations I made in regard to the production of dates. I say that it has been proved that dates can be successfully grown in Queensland and other parts of Australia.

Senator GUTHRIE.—Commercially?

Senator CRAWFORD.—So far the industry has not reached commercial dimensions, for the simple reason that it has not been profitable with the protection of 1d. per lb. Australian dates are in direct competition with the products of countries where there is to be found the cheapest and dirtiest labour in the world. We cannot expect the people of Queensland, or any other part of the Commonwealth, to compete on even terms with Egypt, Palestine, or Mesopotamia. Senator Lynch, who is a business man, knows that such competition is economically impossible, owing to the greater costs in Australia. I can assure Senator Lynch that the statements I have made in regard to the practicability of producing dates in Queensland are not the result of my "inventive imagining," but the result of knowledge acquired as a resident of that State for over thirty-five years.

Senator GUTHRIE (Victoria) [5.54].—Senator Crawford has told us that the reason the date industry, although protected for eleven years, has made no advancement is that the growers—who are mythical, or largely mythical—cannot compete with the cheap labour of other countries.

Senator CRAWFORD.—The growers, certainly, are not numerous.

Senator GUTHRIE.—I ask the honorable senator whether his date-growing friends of Queensland, or the centre of Australia, have ever produced enough dates to supply even their own local townships, although imported dates have to pay heavy freight overseas, a duty, and the rail, camel, or other transport charges?

Question—That the request (Senator GUTHRIE's) be agreed to—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	8
Noes	11

Majority	3
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AYES.

Buzacott, R.	Lynch, P. J.
Drake-Brockman, E. A.	Millen, John D.
Gardiner, A.	
Guthrie, J. F.	Teller:
Henderson, G.	Duncan, W. L.

NOES.

Cox, C. F.	Pratten, H. H.
Crawford, T. W.	Reid, M.
Earle, J.	Rowell, J.
Payne, H. J. M.	Russell, E. J.
Pearce, G. F.	Teller:
Plain, W.	de Largie, H.

Question so resolved in the negative.
Request negatived.

Senator DUNCAN (New South Wales) [5.58].—I do not know why the duty on prunes should be as high as 4½d. per lb. The duty on currants and raisins has been increased to 4d.; but why should prunes need a duty ½d. higher than other dried fruits?

Senator RUSSELL.—Because prunes are being dumped in Australia.

Senator DUNCAN.—It seems to me that the proposed duty is equal to 40 per cent. *ad valorem*.

Senator RUSSELL.—It has been imposed especially for the protection of the fruit-growers of your State.

Senator DUNCAN.—I have not had a request from the fruit-growers of my State to support an increase.

Senator RUSSELL.—The prune-growers of New South Wales are being knocked out by the importation of prunes from California.

Senator DUNCAN.—I rose to ask for information. If the Minister can satisfy me that a duty of 4½d. is necessary, I shall vote for it; but a case should be made out for this proposal.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [6.0].—Honorable senators look to the Minister for everything, instead of getting some information for themselves. During the war there was a large market in Great Britain and Europe for Californian prunes; but since then the European demand has decreased, and these prunes have been dumped in Australia,

mostly to the prejudice of New South Wales growers. The duty is to protect the industry from unnatural conditions.

Senator ROWELL.—A duty of 3d. or 4d. per lb. should be sufficient.

Senator RUSSELL.—Californian importers are selling at a loss to keep up their local market.

Senator DUNCAN.—Cannot the Minister give figures in support of his statement?

Senator RUSSELL.—My information is that the European demand for Californian prunes has fallen off considerably, and that, therefore, producers are exporting certain stocks to Australia at very low prices, and Australian growers have complained that they are not able to produce prunes at the prices quoted for the Californian fruit. The question is, Shall we protect the local industry?

Senator LYNCH.—The Ministry is taking advantage of a condition abroad that is only temporary to impose a permanent duty. The European market may revive in a year or two.

Senator ROWELL (South Australia) [6.4].—In my opinion, prunes are plentiful now because they have been held back to secure higher prices, and there has been a slump. A gentleman living close to me told me that he had kept back a few tons to get better prices. I hope that the Committee will be consistent. We have made the duty on currants and raisins 4d., and that should be a sufficient rate for prunes. Personally, I think that 3d. would be enough for all dried fruits. Last night Mr. Chaffey told me that there was a movement at Mildura to ask Parliament to increase the duty from 3d., and that the general opinion was that that would be unwise. This Committee has done what the growers seem to think unnecessary. I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make the duty, sub-item (c), per lb., 4d.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [6.5].—In 1918-19 the import of dry fruits under the heading "Other", which consisted chiefly of prunes, was 590,485 lbs., and in 1919-20, 1,317,248 lbs. That shows that there is dumping.

Senator GUTHRIE.—What was the former duty on prunes?

Senator RUSSELL.—Threepence per lb. The growers of New South Wales asked the Government for a duty of 6d. to prevent dumping from California, but we thought 4½d. sufficient. If the Committee reduces the rate, the duty will have no protective value.

Senator DUNCAN (New South Wales) [6.6].—I rose, in the first instance, to ask for information, and was surprised that the Minister seemed to resent that. He seemed to think that honorable senators should apprise themselves of all the facts.

Senator RUSSELL.—I do not think that you should ask me to have every detail about 600 items.

Senator DUNCAN.—No senator expects the Minister to possess one detail about any of the items; but we expect the officials of the Customs Department to be in possession of the fullest information, and it is his duty to make it available to the Committee, so that we may know what we are doing.

Senator RUSSELL.—The notes I have are about 3 feet thick, and for a long time I could not find the exact information.

Senator DUNCAN.—Had the Minister said that at first, the explanation would have been sufficient. Certainly, if he cannot fairly be expected, with the assistance of the Customs officials, to explain each of these proposals, honorable senators cannot be expected to know all about them. My request was perfectly legitimate.

Senator RUSSELL.—Senators are not discussing items; they are making second-reading speeches.

Senator DUNCAN.—I did not make a speech; I merely asked for information, and that the Minister seemed to resent. I shall not vote for any duty unless I know it to be needed, or the Minister or some other senator gives me a sufficient reason for voting for it.

Senator RUSSELL.—You ask questions in a second-reading speech.

Senator DUNCAN.—The Minister has given some information, supplying figures to back up his bald assertion that California has been exporting huge quantities of prunes to Australia because of a decrease in the European demand. That information removes my opposition to the duty.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [6.10].—The figures which the Minister (Senator Russell) provided with respect to the importation of prunes, apples, pears, and the like afford the fullest possible justification for an increase of the duty by 1d. per lb. I am sympathetic with the amendment because it aims at consistency. Up to the present moment the Committee has made inconsiderable progress upon the schedule. Practically the whole of the afternoon has been devoted to an exhaustive discussion of one item, which has not yet been finished with. The Government appear to think that the Tariff should leave the Senate with every "i" dotted and every "t" crossed. If the Minister would display a little more elasticity in the consideration of obvious incongruities and anomalies, considerable time would be saved.

Senator RUSSELL.—I have been wonderfully patient, seeing that about half the members of the Senate are indulging in second-reading speeches upon sub-items.

Senator PRATTEN.—I quite appreciate the difficulties in which Senator Russell finds himself, and I shall not occupy further time, except to repeat that, on the ground of consistency, I support the request.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [6.14].—I do not much care whether the duty upon prunes be 4d. or 4½d. per lb. What difference does a half-penny make, anyhow? The Minister (Senator Russell) has stated that the prune-growers of New South Wales have asked that the duty be 6d. Who were these people? I do not think they were the growers. Probably the request emanated from some company or Combine which has been handling the produce.

Senator PRATTEN.—The Batlow branch of the Fruit-growers Association of New South Wales made the request by medium of one of the honorable senator's party colleagues. I refer to Mr. Parker Moloney.

Senator GARDINER.—The honorable senator will not find that the actual growers have asked for another half-penny. All they want is a fair chance and fair play without Tariff handicap, or so-called encouragement, and they will hold their own against all-comers.

Senator PRATTEN.—I refer Senator Gardiner to *Hansard* (*vide* page 8530), in which is published a letter from the Batlow prune-growers, which was read by Mr. Parker Moloney in another place.

Senator GARDINER.—No doubt, but I am not prepared to tax 1,000,000 consumers for the benefit of two or three people, particularly when—according to the Government—they have ample protection already. The duty of 4d. per lb. is too high. I appeal for reason on behalf of the people. Apparently, however, this unhealthy encouragement by way of steadily increased protection is to continue for years. When are the consumers to have their turn? First of all, we are asked to “give the orchardists a chance to establish themselves.” The next cry is, “Give them an opportunity to grow their prunes”; and the next, “Give them a chance to secure up-to-date machinery for preparing the prunes for market, and then the people will reap the benefit.” When? The Australian prune industry would appear to be growing weaker and weaker. Prunes imported from America are not grown with the aid of cheap labour. Freights cannot be secured for nothing. Why should the Australian growers require more and more protection? As for the appeal of the growers in the Batlow district, they have the good fortune to be established on one of the richest areas in New South Wales. Almost anything cultivated in the neighbourhood grows to perfection.

Senator PRATTEN.—The honorable senator ought not to jeopardize the reelection of his colleague.

Senator GARDINER.—My colleague can look after himself. Mr. Parker Moloney may be relied on to secure his return to the Commonwealth Legislature upon general merits, and not by the exclusive favour of the Batlow prune-growers. The duty has been increased by 1½d. per lb. from what the Protectionists thought was adequate a few years ago. It is not a small increase, because it represents approximately 50 per cent. of the value of the product, and that has to be added to the price the consumer has to pay. The Minister has said that it is 50 per cent. below what the growers have asked, and we appear to be legislating in this way: The Government impose a duty of 3d. per

lb., the producers ask for 6d. per lb., and the rate is eventually fixed at 4½d. per lb. I desire to voice the opinion of the unorganized people who have to pay, because those who are formed into companies and Combines have offices, can frame resolutions and circulars, and distribute them throughout the Commonwealth. In that way their interests are safeguarded. During the last three weeks I have had an opportunity of visiting three States in the Commonwealth, and I have never seen so many unemployed as there are at present, notwithstanding that we have a Protective Tariff in operation, which is bringing in approximately £30,000,000 per annum. If the arguments of the Protectionists are sound, and high duties create employment, one would expect to find every one profitably engaged.

Senator KEATING.—Is the honorable senator speaking of a revenue Tariff?

Senator GARDINER.—Is this a revenue Tariff? It has been described by the Minister as a scientific Protectionist Tariff.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN.—I ask the honorable senator to discuss the sub-item before the Committee.

Senator GARDINER.—I was merely referring to the fact that the Minister has described this as a scientific Tariff.

Senator RUSSELL.—That is hardly correct.

Senator GARDINER.—I shall quote from *Hansard* to prove that what I have said is correct, if the Minister doubts me.

Senator RUSSELL.—The honorable senator asked me if it was a scientific Tariff, and surely he did not expect me to reply in the negative.

Senator GARDINER.—The duty on prunes has been increased by 50 per cent. with the object of encouraging more people to undertake prune-growing, and to assist manufacturers in extending their plants. But we have been doing that for years under a Protective Tariff, and what has been the result? After years of what has been considered by the Protectionists a sufficient duty, we now find that the industry is in such a precarious position that the duty has been increased by 50 per cent. If we proceed as we are going, in ten or twenty years' time we shall be asked to impose a duty of 100 per cent., because the producers will not then be in

a better position than they are in to-day. We are now asked to place prunes on the same basis as other dried fruits by reducing the duty by $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb.; but when such a proposal is submitted the Minister will not budge. If we continue in this way the Tariff discussion will never end. Personally, I would like to see the whole schedule disposed of by to-morrow.

Senator RUSSELL.—Perhaps it would be if the honorable senator had his own way.

Senator GARDINER.—I am not likely to get that, because it would be futile for me to move in the direction I desire. I have already suggested that it would be advantageous to take a page at a time, and I trust the Committee will agree to my proposal. One of the Government supporters has moved to reduce the duty by $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb., in order to place prunes on the same basis as other dried fruits.

Senator RUSSELL.—The honorable senator does not believe in a duty of 4d.

Senator GARDINER.—I do not believe in any duty at all; but I am prepared to compromise in an endeavour to make some progress. The Minister says that the duty had been fixed at $4\frac{1}{2}$ d., and he will not agree to any reduction or any increase.

Senator RUSSELL.—The proposed rate is $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. below what the producers consider fair in the circumstances.

Senator GARDINER.—I suppose the Government considered a duty of 3d. per lb. adequate in the first instance, and now they are supporting a duty of $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. As the Committee may wish to divide on this sub-item before the dinner adjournment, I shall not detain honorable senators longer at this juncture.

Senator DUNCAN (New South Wales) [6.27].—I would not have spoken again but for the attack made upon me by the honorable senator who leads the Opposition when he is here, and who said that he represented the masses of people who are not banded together in any organization, and who cannot frame resolutions and distribute circulars in connexion with the duties provided in the schedule. I desire to remind the honorable senator that he does represent organizations, or people who are able to form organizations, some of whom quite recently carried a resolution censuring him for the hostile

attitude he adopted towards Australian manufactures. That is sufficient to show that, while Senator Gardiner may claim to represent certain people, the representation is not of the character desired.

Senator GARDINER.—Will the honorable senator supply the facts?

Senator DUNCAN.—I am not in the habit of making statements that I cannot prove. Surely the honorable senator is aware that a section of the electors in the district of Dalley carried a resolution censuring him for the Free Trade speech he delivered in the Senate on the Tariff. I refer to the resolution carried by the Dalley Federal Council, representing the whole of the Labour Leagues in that electorate. That shows that he is grossly misrepresenting the opinions of many people whom he is supposed to represent.

Senator GARDINER.—Does the honorable senator think that some of my constituents would carry a resolution without notifying me?

Senator DUNCAN.—They are capable of doing all sorts of things.

Sitting suspended from 6.30 to 8 p.m.

Senator DUNCAN.—Senator Gardiner seems to have taken a certain amount of umbrage because I am supporting an increased duty on prunes in order to protect the interests of a great many soldier settlers who have been encouraged by the Repatriation Department to take up holdings for the purpose of producing prunes. When I remember the general attitude of the party which Senator Gardiner represents here towards the returned soldier, I am not at all surprised that he should resent any honorable senator saying a few words on behalf of an industry in which so many returned soldiers are engaged. I feel sure, however, that the opinion of honorable senators generally will be that it is wise and proper, in view of all the circumstances, to give some increased protection to this industry. After hearing the explanation of the Minister on this item, I cannot in any way reproach myself for having decided to give my vote for the increased duty. I hope that the Committee will agree to the increase, particularly in order that soldier settlers who have been encouraged to go into the industry may be given that protection against foreign competition which is necessary.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [8.2].—One can scarcely take exception to the concluding remarks of Senator Duncan, but before the adjournment for dinner the honorable senator attacked me personally and made the statement that an organization in New South Wales had carried a motion of censure against me. I appeal to the good sense of honorable senators to say whether they think it is likely that any organization connected with the Labour movement would censure the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate because he has expressed himself in opposition to particular duties. I cannot imagine that anything of the kind would occur outside of Gladesville. Even if the honorable senator's statement be true, what is the censure of any organization compared with the votes of confidence which I have received time after time from the whole of the people of the State which I represent. The bitterest censure of any organization in the Labour movement is not to be compared with the favours I have received from the movement from time to time. I know that in the electorate to which the honorable senator referred there is a lunatic asylum known as the Gladesville Asylum.

The **CHAIRMAN** (Senator Bakhap).—I ask the honorable senator not to introduce that matter when the Committee is considering the Tariff item covering the duty on prunes.

Senator GARDINER.—I should like to remind you, sir, that I did not introduce it. I think if I had done so I would very properly have been called to order. After considerable stress has been laid upon the fact that I was censured, and although that reference should have been, but was not, ruled out of order, I am not permitted to reply to it. I shall not, of course, contest your ruling, but it is a little hard when I am the only representative of the Labour party in the Senate that the whole of the members of the Nationalist party, including the Chairman of Committees, should permit me to be attacked, but will not permit me to reply to the attack.

The **CHAIRMAN**.—Order! The honorable senator should not go so far as to say that the Chair has permitted him to be improperly attacked. He should

withdraw that statement in deference to the honorable senator who occupied the Chair temporarily as my *locum tenens*.

Senator GARDINER.—I withdraw the statement, but *Hansard* will record the fact that I was attacked, and that within two minutes after I rose to reply to the attack I was ruled out of order. I will conform to your ruling, apologize for any offence committed, and get back to the question of the duty on prunes.

Senator Duncan is supporting the increase of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. in the duty on prunes because returned soldiers are growing prunes. How many are there engaged in the industry? I venture to say that within the whole of Australia there are not more than a dozen. I suppose that, in most of the hotels and restaurants throughout the country, a dinner is completed with a dish of prunes and rice. Those who in future partake of this dish will be able to say that, in the interest of returned soldiers, Senator Duncan made the price of prunes $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. dearer. The honorable senator, and, indeed, every other member of the Senate, has admitted that a Protective Tariff does make the articles protected dearer. Senator Duncan is going to vote for the increase in the duty in the interest of returned soldier settlers growing prunes, and I intend to oppose it in the interest of returned soldier settlers growing wheat, wool, and bananas. Honorable senators can scarcely blame me for the slow progress that is being made with the schedule. They had a fortnight to themselves without me, but they did not get very far with it. Having studied Taylor's scientific organization for the speeding up of industrial institutions, I again respectfully suggest that the schedule should be put to the Committee a page at a time. We might conveniently commence with the next page, and the items from 54 to 66 inclusive might be put together. This would not in any way restrict the liberty of honorable senators to discuss or request an amendment upon any item included in the page.

The **CHAIRMAN**.—I ask the honorable senator not to anticipate the discussion of an item on another page.

Senator GARDINER.—I intended to ask whether a number of items could be put together in the way I suggest.

The CHAIRMAN.—I shall answer that question when the matter now before the Chair is decided.

Request agreed to.

Item agreed to, subject to requests.

Item 54—

Fruits and vegetables, including ginger n.e.i. (preserved in liquid, or partly preserved, or pulped)—

- (A) Quarter-pints and smaller sizes, per dozen, British, 9d.; intermediate, 1s.; general, 1s. 3d.
- (B) Half-pints and over quarter-pints, per dozen, British, 1s. 3d.; intermediate, 1s. 9d.; general, 2s.
- (C) Pints and over half-pints, per dozen, British, 2s. 6d.; intermediate, 3s. 6d.; general, 4s.
- (D) Quarts and over pints, per dozen, British, 5s.; intermediate, 7s. 6d.; general, 8s. 6d.
- (E) Exceeding a quart, per gallon, British, 1s. 9d.; intermediate, 2s. 6d.; general, 3s.
- (F) When preserved in spirituous liquid, additional duty to be paid on the liquid, per gallon, British, 27s.; intermediate, 28s.; general, 28s.; and on and after 17th September, 1920, per gallon, British, 30s.; intermediate, 31s.; general, 31s.
- (G) Ginger in brine or syrup for the manufacture of preserved ginger, as prescribed by departmental by-laws, free.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [8.8].—This item includes canned fruit. My information is that these duties are held as a cover for the fruit-growers of Australia, but do not affect the price of the commodities, owing to the fact that there is internal competition, and that the industry has reached the stage of over-production. On a previous item, Senator Gardiner, whether jocularly or not I do not know, but in his good-tempered way, made some remarks concerning my previous commercial history. I should like to enlighten the honorable senator on the matter. I tell him here and now that I have never been directly or indirectly concerned in a commercial Combine in my life.

Senator GARDINER.—Was not the honorable senator a Combine himself?

Senator PRATTEN.—Unfortunately, I was not. In my commercial life, I have had to fight very violent and strong opposition. Senator Gardiner may accept my statement on the point. I might add, as a personal note, that I think competition is very good for any person, and, perhaps,

that experience better fits him for a seat in this Legislature.

Senator GARDINER.—I think that is what I said.

Senator PRATTEN.—There can be no objection to these duties, because they do not operate. Unfortunately, Australia is to-day full of stocks of jams and canned fruits which the overseas markets will not at present take.

Senator LYNCH.—Will they not take them at a price?

Senator PRATTEN.—Yes, at a price considerably under the cost of production. Owing to this, one very important factory in Sydney, and another in Melbourne, have now practically gone into liquidation, and have lost nearly the whole of their ordinary shareholders' capital. This has been brought about by heavy consignments of canned fruit having been sent within the last six months to the Mother Country, and to a slump in prices having occurred there. Very heavy claims have now been made to cover the difference between the amounts advanced upon canned goods and the prices they actually brought. The slump in the canned fruit market has jeopardized the position of many of our well-established jam and canned-fruit factories.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [8.12].—I notice that in this item there are articles which might possibly come from Great Britain, and in sub-item A there is a duty proposed in the British preferential column of 9d. per dozen. I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make sub-item (A), British, free.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—Honorable senators have said something about facilitating the business of the Committee. Senator Gardiner has several times preferred a request to me to put the schedule page by page. Many able members of the Senate have occupied this chair before me, and a procedure has been observed in connexion with previous Tariffs which I do not desire to greatly vary; but there is something which the Committee might be willing to do in connexion with the question of the duties to be imposed under the British preferential Tariff. I cannot accept the suggestion that the schedule should be taken a page at a time, because that

would interfere too greatly with the right of honorable senators to discuss the various items appearing on a page. But if Senator Gardiner cares to make a statement to the Committee that he is willing to accept a test vote on the first item on each page to decide the manner in which the Committee will deal with the British preferential Tariff, and to determine his attitude with respect to all the duties appearing in the British preferential column on the same page, I shall be prepared to take the responsibility of putting such a test motion to the Committee, as I think that if that course were adopted it would facilitate the transaction of business.

Senator PRATTEN.—That is only so far as Senator Gardiner is concerned.

The CHAIRMAN.—I have it in mind that that should be confined to action taken by Senator Gardiner.

Senator GARDINER.—I think it might not be regarded as out of order if we discuss this important matter at this stage.

The CHAIRMAN.—I shall take the responsibility of permitting its discussion.

Senator GARDINER.—I have suggested that the schedule should be put to the Committee page by page. We have just reached page 13 in the schedule, and I suggest that the Chairman might put items 54 to 66 inclusive in one motion. That would not interfere with the right of honorable senators to discuss any items appearing on the page. After the discussion had concluded, the whole of these items could be put together. If that course were followed, I should be relieved of the necessity, in giving effect to my intention to endeavour to remove from the schedule any duties operating against Great Britain, of moving for a request to omit duties appearing against each of the items and sub-items on the page. When considering a Supply Bill we often deal with the schedule in Departments, although each Department includes as many items as does a page of the Tariff schedule. That procedure suits the general convenience of honorable senators. Even those who are most desirous of a full discussion on every item must realize that there is a limit to the endurance of the Minister. There is in the Senate only one Minister (Senator Russell) who is in

real sympathy with Protectionist principles, and the strain imposed upon him by several all-night sittings would be considerable.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—There is nothing particularly definite in the honorable senator's suggestion, and, as several Tariffs have been dealt with previously by the Senate, the adoption now of any short cut may only land the Committee in confusion. Probably the old adage holds true, that "the longest way round is the shortest way home." I propose, therefore, to adhere strictly to established procedure, but, in order to expedite business I shall simply call each sub-item, and, after allowing ample time for honorable senators to prefer requests, pass on to the next. They will understand, however, that, once I have declared an item passed, there can be no retracing of our steps, except according to the proper forms prescribed by the Standing Orders.

Request negatived.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [8.17].—I call the attention of the Committee to sub-item G (Ginger, in brine or syrup). We have already increased the duty on preserved ginger, principally for the reason that the price of sugar to-day is twice what it was before the war. Is a duty imposed on syrup?

Senator RUSSELL.—No.

Senator PRATTEN.—Then I think the words "or syrup" should be struck out of the sub-item.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [8.18].—I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make sub-item (B), British, free.

I repeat that there should be no duties imposed upon goods from Great Britain. A great Dominion like Australia, the people of which almost unanimously are ready to do everything they can for Great Britain, and even to make sacrifices for her, should be quite prepared to trade with her without imposing any special restrictions. The very importation of these articles from Great Britain might improve the standard of Australian products. People might find in the British commodity some feature of make-up or marketing that is absent from our own, and healthy competition between our producers and those of Great Britain would be beneficial. Moreover, the wiping out

of this duty would convey to the people of Great Britain an evidence of the goodwill of the Senate towards them. We cannot pretend to love them, and be loyal to them, if we will not trade with them.

Request negatived.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [8.20].—I am sorry that no senator will support me in the desire to trade with Great Britain without restriction. I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make sub-item (c), British, free.

Senator REID.—The honorable senator is becoming an Imperialist.

Senator GARDINER.—I am by no means an Imperialist, but my loyalty to Great Britain is real, and not confined to flag flapping and patriotic stunts. I am willing not only to fight side by side with Great Britain, but to trade with her, and, after all, trade is the more important matter at the present time.

Request negatived.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—If there are no requests in regard to the other sub-items, I shall take a proposal from Senator Gardiner to strike out the British preferential duties on them.

Request, by **Senator GARDINER**, negatived—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make sub-items (d), (e), and (f), British, free.

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [8.25].—I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make the duty on sub-item (g), per lb., 1d.

Raw ginger can be grown in practically all the States.

Senator PAYNE.—Is it grown in Australia?

Senator CRAWFORD.—It is grown in Queensland; I cannot speak of the other States. For the little labour and expense involved in manufacturing preserved ginger, even if sugar is dear at the present time, a duty of 4d. per lb. is too high. We have imposed much lower duties upon other products which have to be grown, and passed through most intricate and expensive processes before the finished article can be put upon the market, and if it is desirable to establish an industry for the manufacture of preserved ginger out of the raw article, imported from

other countries, it is still more desirable to encourage the production of the raw material within the Commonwealth.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [8.27].—I explained to-day that investigations have shown that on account of the high price of sugar in Australia as compared with the price in China, the manufacturers of preserved ginger in this country are likely to discontinue operations. We approached the Sugar Board, with a request that sugar required for this industry should be made available at a lower price, but they declined, and I think rightly, to make a special concession for one industry. The alternatives before us were to allow the industry to go out of existence or to increase the duty by 1d. We granted that increase to-day after due deliberation. The Committee is now asked to undo its previous Act. Are we to stultify ourselves by negativing in the evening what we did in the afternoon? The recipe for the brine in which ginger is imported is unknown to any manufacturer in Australia, and for that reason ginger in brine has to be imported. I believe that ginger can be grown in Australia, but we have yet to start its cultivation.

Senator CRAWFORD.—How can an industry be started without protection?

Senator RUSSELL.—It is inevitable that the price of sugar shall return to normal unless it is kept at its present level by high Protection. Certain people have established an industry for the manufacture of preserved ginger, but the rise in the price of sugar has made its continuance impossible unless further protection is given to it.

Senator PAYNE (Tasmania) [8.30].—We have already dealt with the finished product, preserved ginger, and we are now dealing with the raw material used for its manufacture and which provides that industry with the necessary ammunition to enable it to carry on. I find that under the Tariff of 1914 ginger in brine or syrup was dutiable at 1d. per lb. The Government, in introducing the present Tariff, decided apparently to give relief to those engaged in the manufacture of preserved ginger by admitting their raw material free. I regret that the Minister (Senator Russell) when we were dealing with the manufactured article, did not draw our attention to this fact.

Such information would have been a useful guide to honorable senators in voting on the request to increase the duty on the manufactured article from 3d. to 4d. per lb.

Senator RUSSELL.—I distinctly stated that the reason for this was that the price of sugar outside Australia was lower than that ruling here.

Senator PAYNE.—But the honorable senator did not tell us when we were dealing with the duty on preserved ginger that it was proposed to admit the raw material free.

Senator RUSSELL.—I had intended to move a request for the insertion of a new sub-clause providing that ginger, green, for manufacturing purposes as prescribed by departmental by-laws, should be free; but I found that that could not be done. I had, therefore, to submit an amended proposal.

Senator PAYNE.—The position is that we have requested that manufacturers of preserved ginger be given an additional protection of 1d. per lb.; and we now find that they are also to have their raw material free instead of having to pay, as under the previous Tariff, a duty of 1d. per lb. It is anomalous that we should be called upon to deal with the duty on a finished article before the item relating to the raw material comes before us.

Senator RUSSELL.—The whole process of preserving ginger is not carried out in Australia. The ginger comes out here in a partially manufactured state.

Senator PAYNE.—I accept a certain amount of responsibility for what has taken place in regard to the request for an increased duty on the manufactured article, since I, with other honorable senators, should have looked ahead to discover what alteration, if any, was being made with regard to imports of the raw material.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [8.35].—The request that has been moved, and the explanation which has been made by the Minister (Senator Russell) serve to point out the absurdity of trying to protect our industries through the Customs House. The Minister assures us that he desires that this item shall be free because it deals with the raw material of those engaged in the manufacture of preserved ginger. He

also tells us that the high price of sugar places Australian manufacturers of preserved ginger at a disadvantage as compared with manufacturers abroad. That can be remedied by removing the duty of £6 per ton now levied on sugar.

Senator CRAWFORD.—The duty on preserved ginger is equal to £37 6s. 8d. per ton, although that commodity is only partially manufactured here.

Senator GARDINER.—Sugar is used in the manufacture of preserves, confectionery, and a hundred and one other things, as well as preserved ginger.

Senator CRAWFORD.—A full sugar ration put "ginger" into our troops.

Senator GARDINER.—After that, I shall say no more.

Senator GUTHRIE (Victoria) [8.37].—When I moved a request that the duty on preserved ginger be increased to 4d. per lb., I did not know that the raw material of the industry came in partially manufactured, and that, although it was dutiable at 1d. per lb. under the Tariff of 1914, it was now free. I regret that that information was not furnished the Committee. It seems to me that we have given a double advantage to the manufacturers on whose behalf I spoke. We have increased the duty on the finished article, and we are now giving them their raw material free.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [8.38].—I was originally under the impression that green ginger was used in the manufacture of preserved ginger in Australia, but I subsequently learned that the raw material of the industry is brought out in brine or syrup, and that the process of making that brine or syrup is a secret unknown to local manufacturers. Green ginger can be produced here, but ginger in a partially manufactured state is imported and used by manufacturers of preserved ginger. We consequently admit ginger in brine or syrup for the manufacture of preserved ginger as prescribed by departmental by-laws, free of duty.

Request negatived.

Item agreed to.

Item 55—

Infants' and invalids' foods, as prescribed by departmental by-laws, British, free; intermediate, free; general, free.

Senator SENIOR (South Australia) [8.40].—Although invalids' foods as prescribed by departmental by-laws are admitted free, I understand that an embargo is placed on the free introduction of Horlick's malted milk. Although in composition it very much resembles other invalids' foods which are free, it is singled out for a duty. I should like to know the reason.

Senator RUSSELL.—Infants' and invalids' foods which are not manufactured in Australia are admitted free, but a food very similar to Horlick's malted milk is made at Bacchus Marsh. Glaxo, another Australian product, is also similar to Horlick's malted milk.

Senator SENIOR.—Horlick's malted milk is the only infants' food which is not allowed to come in free under departmental by-laws.

Senator RUSSELL.—In all these matters we have to depend upon the report of the Government Analyst.

Senator SENIOR.—I do not like to see any one manufacturer penalized. Horlick's malted milk consists of desiccated cow's milk, from which some casein has been removed, and a portion of soluble vegetable albumen and cream added. There is no starch in it, so that it is really an invalids' food. Allenbury's food also comes in free.

Senator RUSSELL.—Horlick's milk is not dealt with under this item.

Item agreed to.

Item 56—

Ginger, green, per lb., 1d.

Request (by **Senator GARDINER**) negatived—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make the item, British, free.

Item agreed to.

Item 57—

Grain and pulse

(A) Wheat, per cental, British, free; intermediate and general, 2s.

(B) Barley, per cental, 2s.

(C) Maize, per cental, British, 1s. 6d.; intermediate and general, 2s.

(D) N.E.I., per cental, 1s. 6d.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [8.46].—I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make sub-item (A), intermediate and general, free.

Sub-item A is one of those curious innovations of the Tariff of which we have several samples. So far as we have

heard, there are two reasons for imposing duties—one in order to protect our industries, and the other to bring revenue to the Treasury. Neither of these reasons holds in the present case. There is no necessity for any protection, because the wheat industry can stand alone. The wheat-grower, unlike other producers who have their sponsors in this Chamber, and come to the Treasury for doles, can stand on his own feet, and not only supply the home market, but send his surplus overseas, and compete in the world's market. No revenue is received from this sub-item except in years of scarcity, and then it is so microscopic as to be not worth talking about. In the case of wheat, this is an exporting and not an importing country. During the five years from 1915-16 we have exported wheat annually to the value of from something like £7,000,000 to about £20,000,000.

Senator RUSSELL.—In 1914 we were importing.

Senator LYNCH.—But we exported more than we imported.

Senator RUSSELL.—Not in 1914.

Senator GUTHRIE.—This duty is only a camouflage.

Senator LYNCH.—Yes, it is only a make-believe. No duty has been asked for by the wheat farmers, and the effects of the duty, from the Treasury point of view, are negligible.

Senator RUSSELL.—We imported from Argentine 3,170,000 bushels in 1915-16—the year following the drought—and a very poor sample it was!

Senator LYNCH.—In 1915-16 we imported £1,738,000 worth.

Senator RUSSELL.—Last year, but for the action of the States in buying wheat to cover them from June to December, we should have had to import. We had to stop exportation.

Senator LYNCH.—This is a duty that is imposed only when protection is not required, and it then means a tax, the result of which is hardship.

Senator RUSSELL.—I notice that large quantities of pork are imported from New Zealand, and yet pigs have been put on the free list.

The **CHAIRMAN** (**Senator Bakhap**).—It is absolutely wrong to discuss the importation of pigs on the item of wheat.

Senator LYNCH.—The plain position is that in normal years, which are happily in the majority, we not only supply all our own wheat requirements, but send

substantial shipments overseas. In abnormal times, when we do not produce enough wheat, we import in order to meet our own necessities; and then the Treasurer, under these famine-stricken conditions, endeavours to exact from the consumers of this country an extra dole. In other words, the Treasurer imposes a tax on the food of the people, and this, in my opinion, almost amounts to an immoral form of taxation. As a representative of the wheat-growers, I wish to show other producers of Australia that we can stand alone, without such doles as the Treasurer has been asked to hand out at the instance of honorable senators. The wheat-growers, on the poor soils of this country, and in places with a comparatively small rainfall, do not desire to crawl on all-fours to the Treasury, as do some of the agriculturists of Queensland. We have heard a good deal about black labour from the representatives of the northern States, just as though the wheat-growers never experience such competition. The wheat-growers send their surplus to the overseas markets, and have there to compete with the products of the same black labour that Senator Crawford has been holding up as a bogey during the last week.

Senator RUSSELL.—We do not always have a surplus.

Senator LYNCH.—What is the good of all this make-believe? During the last twenty-five years, excepting 1902 and in 1914, we have always had a surplus.

Senator RUSSELL.—We refused sales last year at 15s. because we had not the wheat to send away.

Senator LYNCH.—What is the good of quibbling? The country produced the wheat and it is here. In 1902 and in 1914, when drought swept the continent, we did not produce enough wheat for our own people, and it was then proposed to levy a tax on the consuming public. I say again that this is a most immoral proposition, which, so far as I know, is not supported by any evidence of economy. The Senate should not countenance such a thing as taxing the food of the people at a time of stress and famine. I remind Senator Crawford, and those who support him in asking for high duties on the ground of black labour competition, that the Aus-

tralian wheat-growers, not on £20-an-acre soil, but on soil that is in the least favoured areas so far as rainfall is concerned, are able to hold their own in the markets of the world. They do not come here with a lot of "tarradiddles," and whine to Ministers to sustain them; they are prepared, not only to feed the Commonwealth, but to send their surplus abroad in the face of all the black labour competition. According to the *Commonwealth Year-Book*, the average price per quarter of Chili wheat on the London market is 30s.; Argentine, 31s. 1d.; Bulgaria, 28s. 7d.; Roumania, 31s. 2d.; Russia, 30s. 9d.; United States of America, 30s. 7d.; Canada, 30s. 10d.; British India, 28s. 7d.; New Zealand, 29s. 7d.; and Australia, 31s. 4d. Thus Australia beats the lot, without any protection, and without a brass farthing of Treasury patronage. The Australian wheat-grower has to send his product to a market where it is jostled by the wheat grown by black labour in British India and in other countries I have mentioned; and, without any protection, they are knocking the stuffing out of all competitors. The Australian wheat-grower has no need to crawl to the Minister, and debase himself in a fashion not creditable to Australians; he does not seek protection on the ground of black labour competition, although the wheat is grown, not on expensive virgin soil, but on the poorest. There is no whining from the Australian wheat-growers, and I am proud to belong to a fraternity which does not come to the Government, cap in hand, as do the Queensland producers, but which is able and willing to meet the competition of labour—black, brown, and brindled.

Senator RUSSELL.—I heard the honorable senator move for a bonus and a guarantee.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Yes, a guarantee for ten years for the poor, unfortunate wheat-grower.

Senator LYNCH.—The Minister is entirely wrong; the terms of my motion would not have involved the Government in the expenditure of a brass farthing. I asked for a guarantee of 5s. per bushel on the understanding that when the parity value went above that, the Treasury should take the extra amount, and that when it went

below it, the Treasury should pay the difference, but in no case would the Government be at a loss.

Senator DE LARGIE.—At that time the parity was nearer 10s.

Senator LYNCH.—Yes. My desire was to stabilize the industry, and to give heart and hope to the men who are working out in the arid wastes. Their position is very different from that of those who live on the Queensland littoral. They are on the frontiers of civilization; they depend upon themselves, and by their inherent energies forge their way in life instead of leaning on the Government, as some of the Queenslanders do. I speak on behalf of no small number. There are 235,000 agriculturists in this country, of whom 80 per cent., or about 200,000, are engaged in the arduous pursuit of wheat-growing. Theirs is not a spoon-fed industry. To them the Government gives no doles. Their energies are something of which the nation may be proud. In a voice without tremor and without the suggestion of a whine, attention should be called to the fact that we produce wheat without help from the Government, and ask for no communal aid. That has been our stand in the past, and will be our attitude in the future. As for this padding of the Tariff with a duty of 2s. per cental on wheat, it is useless to us, and we decline it.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—The honorable senator's time has expired.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [9.4].—If the Committee wishes to wipe out the duty on wheat, it is free to do so; I rise chiefly to reply to Senator Lynch's declaration against Government doles, and his objection to whining. The honorable senator has made more applications for guarantees to wheat-growers, and more applications for information as to when the next wheat payments would be made, than any one else. To that I take no exception, but in reply to what he has said I wish to point out that during the war, when the banks had refused to lend money on wheat, and a better security than the credit of the States was demanded, the Commonwealth Government borrowed £20,000,000 on overdraft, and kept the wheat industry organized,

and thus greatly benefited the wheat-growers. To-day in Victoria there is a political crisis because the farmers wish to continue to receive Government assistance. I have never accused the farmers of looking for a dole, but it was from the Commonwealth that they had to get help during the war. The honorable senator is a wheat-grower, and good luck to him; but he must remember that at one time the Commonwealth had advanced on wheat more than £21,000,000, and that we thus kept the farmers going. As much as nine-tenths of the value of the wheat had been advanced in some cases before any of it had been sold overseas. The duty in the Tariff was originally imposed at the request of the farmers, but we cannot now shut our eyes to the fact that there has been an immense development of wheat-growing in the East, where for some years Australia had a monopoly of the grain and flour trade. To-day, Manchuria is delivering flour and wheat there at 20 per cent. less than it can be sent from Australia. That country, with China and India, have captured the Eastern market. The East has awakened; but I hope that the time will never come when Senator Lynch will have to ask for duties on wheat to keep the Australian market for Australian farmers, and to protect them against the competition of men of the Eastern races. On Friday last a deputation of millers complained that Australian wheat was not wanted in the East, because the Eastern market was supplied from the countries that I have named. For many years the London parity has governed the world's markets for wheat, finally determining prices even in Canada and the United States of America. Senator Lynch has told us with pride that Australian wheat brings the highest price in London. That is because it has a hard, white grain, the flour of which is useful to blend with the flour made from soft wheat. It is this quality of hardness that gives our wheat its special value. But the honorable senator's sneer against the Government is not warranted. We have not offered doles to the farmers; but we have tried to co-operate with them, and we have assisted them. Last year we were successful in selling their wheat for as much as 7s. 9d. per bushel, a price hitherto unknown for Australian wheat.

But in June of that year the Wheat Board saw that there was likely to be a shortage of wheat in Australia. It had no authority to stop the exportation of wheat, being merely a selling and administrative agency; but it was then evident to us that if we went on selling wheat abroad, Australia, by the following December, would not have sufficient to provide herself with bread. We therefore called a Conference of the State authorities, and they as a whole agreed to purchase at the then London parity of 7s. 8d. enough to cover local supplies for the period from June to the end of the year. In the following October and November, the price of wheat rose to 15s. per bushel, and we were so short that we had to refuse business with South Africa at 14s. 6d. to 15s. That was why South Africa started to buy our second and third-grade wheat, from which transactions emanated the recent trouble. The present year has been very good. The Government are indifferent whether this item of duty remains or is wiped out. It was not imposed by the present Ministry. We have no desire to hand out doles to the farmers. We have done our best, according to our light, to give genuine and, I think, most valuable, assistance to farmers. So far as the Wheat Board is concerned, it comes with a bad grace, after the Board has given seven years of honorary service, to be told that we have been serving out doles. The duty upon wheat is neither protective nor revenue-productive. It was imposed by a former Government to provide the farmers of Australia with a guarantee that they would not be injured by the importation of cheap wheat, and we have now, as I have shown, to face the possibility of cheap wheat being sent to us from Manchuria and China. If honorable senators consider that this danger has passed, let them wipe out the duty.

Senator GUTHRIE (Victoria) [9.13].—As a wheat-grower and farmer I congratulate the Government upon what they have done for the wheat-growers of Australia. They have done more for the primary producer than any other Government I know of. At the same time, I take exception to the camouflage contained in the Tariff. It is palpably absurd and stupid to impose import duties on live cattle, live sheep, and wheat,

with respect to which Australia is an exporter. We never import cattle, sheep, or wheat except in periods of drought and starvation, when no wheat-grower or cattle raiser in Australia desires the operation of a duty. The Government would appear to be endeavouring to persuade the farmer that he is being given the benefit of Protection, whereas he is the only man in all the land who has no protection, and never has had.

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [9.16].—I regret that Senator Lynch should have mentioned my name so frequently, and in such an offensive manner. I have done no whining with respect to the industries of Queensland or of any other State. I have a public duty to perform, and I endeavour to do so in as manly a fashion as Senator Lynch. When I consider it necessary I speak, and shall continue to speak, regardless of Senator Lynch's sensitive feelings. It is true that there is a number of protected industries in Australia, and it is equally true that there are some which do not directly benefit from Protection. Those countries which depend entirely upon primary production are much poorer than others which have a number of important secondary industries, such as there are in Australia. If we had had to import all those commodities which we have produced under a policy of Protection during the last few years, we would have created a position in regard to exchange which would have made Australia one of the poorest countries in the world to-day. As for the hard-working wheat-growers, I doubt whether they toil any harder than men engaged in other branches of agriculture. Upon the whole, the agriculturist, no matter what may be the commodity he is producing, is among the hardest of all workers. I have no desire to minimize the value of the wheat or the pastoral industry; but the prosperity of Australia cannot be maintained, nor can a very large population be supported, upon primary industries alone. No industry in the past few years has received the same consideration from the Government as wheat-growing. It is not long since the Federal Parliament passed a Bill to provide for a loan of £500,000 to wheat-growers in Western Australia in connexion with a scheme which the State

Government and Parliament would not support.

Senator LYNCH.—The loan is to be repaid with interest.

Senator CRAWFORD.—I did not raise my voice against the proposition, but the security was such that the Western Australian Government would not incur any liability in connexion with it. The statement of the Minister (Senator Russell) should receive every consideration. The strides made in the production of wheat in Manchuria have been remarkable. Members of this Parliament were informed not long ago by a gentleman well acquainted with the East that Manchuria had a population of something like 30,000,000, but that it was capable of supporting 250,000,000. I understand that in Manchuria and Siberia, just as in Russia-in-Europe, there are enormous wheat areas. Australian farmers may find in those countries such strong competitors that there will not be the same overseas market for Australian wheat as hitherto. The reminder may impress on honorable senators how necessary it is that other industries should be established—industries which will support a large population, so that the home market may become ever more valuable. We do not know what is before us in regard to prices ruling in overseas markets for wheat or any other primary products. I would not have risen if it had not been for the personal allusions of Senator Lynch concerning my alleged whining attitude in regard to certain industries which I desire to see adequately protected.

Senator GARDINER.—How would the honorable senator describe his attitude in words other than those used by Senator Lynch?

Senator CRAWFORD.—The honorable senator or any other honorable senator can apply to my attitude whatever description he prefers, but I resent being referred to in such a manner. It is difficult to overcome certain prejudices, but so far as the wheat-growing industry in Western Australia is concerned, I trust that Senator Lynch and others who are engaged in wheat production in that State will experience better times than they have had during recent years. I can assure Senator Lynch that we would have been pleased to have seen him in his place in the Senate when the measure to

which I have referred was under discussion instead of looking after his interests in Western Australia.

Senator DE LARGIE (Western Australia) [9.22].—I trust that Senator Lynch will not persist in his effort to remove this duty. While I agree with him in many of the arguments he has submitted, I think there is a possibility of his action being misconstrued. The duty is of very little benefit to the wheat-growers of the Commonwealth, and I do not think it has ever been imposed. It has been pointed out that when there was a scarcity of wheat the duty was valueless, because it was either ignored or temporarily removed. The facts and figures given by the Vice-President of the Executive Council (Senator Russell) as to what happened last year is a good illustration of what could have been done for the farmers if proper steps had been taken. If the Australian farmers insisted on sending their wheat overseas and selling it at the world's parity of 14s. 6d. per bushel instead of accepting the Australian price of 7s. 8d. per bushel, the Australian consumers would have realized that they had been obtaining supplies at a lower rate than any other people in the world. Similar circumstances may arise in the future, and if the farmers are well organized and are able to take advantage of the overseas price through the medium of co-operative concerns or Government Pools, they will be able to secure world's parity, and the consumers individually or collectively will have to pay, in addition to the cost of the wheat, the extra freight, to bring it back to Australia. That may occur during drought periods such as those referred to by the Minister, and I trust, in order to prevent wheat being dumped into Australia from black-labour countries—I do not think it at all likely—that this safeguard will be allowed to remain.

Senator Cox.—There are large areas of good country in Syria where wheat equal to that produced in Australia can be grown.

Senator DE LARGIE.—They may be able to produce wheat in Mesopotamia, but up to the present we have not had any practical demonstration of that country's possibilities. As the duty is not likely to do any harm—it has not done any good—I trust that Senator Lynch will not persist in his request.

Senator KEATING (Tasmania) [9.27].—I trust that Senator Lynch will not be successful in obtaining the support of a majority of the Committee, and that the Vice-President of the Executive Council (Senator Russell) will adhere to the proposed duty. During the Minister's speech he seemed to infer that it did not matter whether the duty appeared in the schedule or not. He also emphasized the fact that it was there when the Government took office, and if such is the case it is a legacy from their predecessors.

Senator PRATTEN.—It is a new duty.

Senator KEATING.—In the 1901-2 Tariff the duty upon wheat was 1s. per cental, and a storm of opposition was raised because it was submitted to Parliament at a time when there was actually a drought, or a drought pending. Strong representations were made to the Government of the day that wheat should be allowed to be imported free. Among those who made strong representations were State Governments, including the Government of New South Wales, who represented that, in consequence of the drought conditions prevailing, farmers and others should be allowed to import wheat duty free. The Commonwealth Government at that time informed the New South Wales Government that if they were interested in achieving that result they could very easily do so by importing wheat and paying the duty, because under the Braddon clause they would be returned three-fourths of the duty paid. I am not sure if the duty has been in operation ever since, but I am inclined to think it has. Even those opposing it have said that it has not done much harm. It is not a Protective duty, and it will never be a revenue-producing one in the event of a drought. If that is the position, we have to consider it, not merely upon its individual merits, but in relation to the Tariff as a whole. This Tariff has been framed in a different manner from any Tariff Parliament has previously considered, because the schedule has three columns. There is a provision in a portion of the Bill covering the schedule which enables the Government to make arrangements with different countries whereby a duty can be moved from the general to the intermediate column. If we have a duty such as this in the intermediate and general columns,

we shall have a lever by which we can arrange or negotiate on a reciprocal basis with other countries. That is the position in the case of New Zealand. Arrangements for reciprocity were entered into in 1906, when Mr. Seddon, the Premier of New Zealand, was in Australia. He took back with him to New Zealand, on that last fatal journey of his, a proposal for duties in connexion with which reciprocal arrangements could be entered into between New Zealand and the Commonwealth.

Senator GUTHRIE.—In those days New Zealand grew enough wheat to meet her own requirements. She is now an importer of wheat, and has been for years.

Senator KEATING.—I am mentioning this as an illustration to show that the duty which appears in this schedule enabled the Government of the Commonwealth at the time to come to a tentative reciprocal arrangement with Mr. Seddon. The appearance of this duty in the schedule as submitted by the Government to-day, even though it be not operative in normal times, will be a lever to enable the Government at any future time, should that be considered necessary, to enter into reciprocal arrangements with other countries to whom it might be a matter of importance to introduce their wheat into Australia. For this reason, I hope that it will be realized that this duty does not appear in the schedule for nothing, nor has it remained in our Tariff since 1901 for nothing. It may be the means of enabling the Government in future to negotiate reciprocal arrangements with other countries; and for that reason I hope the Vice-President of the Executive Council (Senator Russell) will stand by it, and that the Committee will support it.

Senator PRATTEN (New South Wales) [9.32].—I want to touch upon an aspect of the matter which has not yet been considered by the Committee. In my opinion, the Minister for Trade and Customs (Mr. Greene) was very wise when last year he included this duty on wheat in the Tariff. It is the first time that wheat has been dutiable since 1908, and my references do not go back beyond that time. It will be remembered that this Parliament and Government have arranged, in connexion with the Wheat Pool, that the remainder of the year's sales of wheat for home consumption shall average 9s. per

bushel. Senator Russell will indorse what I say when I inform honorable senators that, but for this duty of 2s. per bushel on this wheat, it was within the bounds of possibility, only a few months ago, for cheap wheat from the west coast of America to have been dumped here at a price below the price fixed for Australian wheat for home consumption.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Where was there cheap wheat on the west coast of America?

Senator PRATTEN.—Two or three months ago wheat went down almost to a dollar per bushel at Chicago.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Chicago is not on the west coast of America.

Senator PRATTEN.—Chicago is in the centre of the wheat districts of America, and wheat might have been brought from Chicago to the west coast of America and delivered here, assuming a cheap freight, at under 9s. per bushel, the price at which Australian wheat has to be sold to local consumers.

Senator RUSSELL.—Wheat certainly fell below 7s. at one time.

Senator CRAWFORD.—It got very nearly down to dollar wheat.

Senator JOHN D. MILLEN.—That was forward buying.

Senator GUTHRIE.—I think that wheat was never below 7s. per bushel.

Senator PRATTEN.—I am satisfied that my information is fairly accurate. I went into the matter carefully some months ago, and wheat in Chicago, the centre of the wheat States, on the farms or in the railway trucks, went down to very nearly one dollar per bushel. My information is that if there had been no duty on wheat in our Tariff Australian millers could then have imported wheat, and could have undersold flour made from Australian wheat at 9s. per bushel.

Senator DE LARGIE.—If the honorable senator went into the matter carefully, can he say what it would have cost to haul the wheat over the Rockies to Vancouver, or to any of the Californian ports, and then ship it to Australia?

Senator PRATTEN.—The cost would not have been as much as the difference between dollar wheat and wheat at 9s. per bushel, which had to be paid for it in Australia, given reasonably cheap freight across the Pacific for the American wheat. A price of 9s. per bushel was fixed for Australian wheat for local consumption, in order that, in the interests

of Australian wheat-growers, a fair average might be maintained throughout the year as between the Australian price and the world's parity. It is true that the world's parity is now below 9s. per bushel, but it also went up to 11s. and 12s. per bushel, and the Government very fairly tried to even up the position between wheat-growers and wheat consumers in Australia. I reiterate that, but for the duty of 2s. per bushel on wheat in our Tariff, it was quite possible that at one time wheat might be imported from America to Australia and sold here at a price below that fixed for our wheat for local consumption.

Senator RUSSELL.—Despite the collapse in the price of wheat for a couple of months in Europe, our overseas sales of wheat have averaged over 9s. per bushel.

Senator PRATTEN.—I understand that the Wheat Board, very properly, suspended sales of Australian wheat during the temporary collapse in price referred to by the Minister. I hope that the Committee will pass this as a practical duty, and one which has been effective only so recently as within the last three or four months.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [9.37].—I am rather pleased that Senator Lynch has submitted his request. This whiff of fresh air from the wheat-fields of Western Australia was very much needed. The honorable senator was right in his statement that the people tilling the poorer lands in Australia are not whining for protection from the Government, and he was right also in his statement that this duty represents no protection to Australian wheat-growers. I can give honorable senators the importations of wheat for some years past. In 1909, they amounted to 128 bushels; in 1910, 325 bushels; in 1911, 113 bushels; in 1912, 1,483 bushels; in 1913, 60 bushels; in 1914, 1,641,237 bushels.

Senator RUSSELL.—My figures give a higher importation for that year.

Senator GARDINER.—I have quoted from the figures supplied by the Commonwealth Statistician; but the discrepancy may be accounted for by a note to the figures which reads—

Customs duties on wheat were suspended from 12th December, 1914, to 12th November, 1915, and from 10th August, 1917, to 25th March, 1920.

Senator RUSSELL.—That was when all the States were importing from Argentina.

Senator GARDINER.—The point I wanted to make was that, on the only occasion when wheat would have been imported, and the wheat-grower might have gained an advantage from a Protective duty, the Government suspended the duty in the interests of the community as a whole.

Senator EARLE.—How could the wheat-grower be affected if he had no wheat to sell?

Senator GARDINER. — There has been no occasion when there has not been some wheat to sell in some portion of Australia. Last year the Minister for Trade and Customs restricted the sale of the Western Australian wheat. Western Australia had a bumper crop, and could supply Victoria. Victoria, also, was in the fortunate position of having a good wheat crop in that season. In 1914-15, when wheat was being imported, the duty was suspended.

Senator GUTHRIE.—And always will be in a bad season.

Senator GARDINER.—Exactly. The same thing occurred from 10th August, 1917, to 25th March, 1920. Senator Lynch was quite correct in saying that this duty is a mere pretence. Why throw dust in the eyes of the farmers by pretending to give an advantage when no real advantage exists? Senator Crawford took exception to the reference to Queenslanders, who are profitably farming rich lands, whining for more assistance from the Government. It is interesting to note that the average value of the wheat crop for the past nine seasons was £2 6s. 3d. per acre. It reached its highest point in 1915-16, when it was £3 4s. 7d. per acre. In 1916-17 it was £2 10s. 10d., and in 1917-18 £2 15s. 8d. The wheat farmers are not asking for Government aid, but men cultivating banana lands worth hundreds of pounds per acre have asked for the imposition of enormous duties. "Whining" is a good word to apply to those senators who, having in their own State the richest lands in Australia, ask that the people toiling on the poorer lands shall be compelled to pay higher prices for the produce of those rich lands. I find that for the ten seasons, 1908-18, the average yield of wheat per acre was 11.37 bushels. It is pleasing indeed to have two representatives of the wheat-

growers in the persons of Senators Lynch and Guthrie pointing out that this duty is only a sham. I hope that the Senate will discard it altogether, and not wait till there is a chance of wheat being imported, and then ask for its repeal in order to prevent the farmers getting a higher price for their product.

Senator LYNCH (Western Australia) [9.42].—Senator Pratten suggested the possibility of Australia being invaded by the cheap wheat of America. The Senate will agree that he would be a very poor American wheat operator who would send grain all the way to Australia for 9s. a bushel, when, by simply sending it across the Atlantic, he could get a very much higher return in Europe. At the time to which Senator Pratten referred London parity was from 75s. to 80s. per quarter.

Senator GUTHRIE.—They were not selling wheat; they were only selling "futures."

Senator LYNCH.—The situation which Senator Pratten stressed was only a flash in the pan.

Senator PRATTEN.—Australian buyers could have operated in America.

Senator LYNCH.—Yes, but it is clear that the American operator would not send his wheat to Australia when he could get a higher price in the London market. What the honorable senator referred to was only a passing condition in the wheat market of America.

Senator RUSSELL.—I have known the British Government, during the war, to borrow 500,000 tons of wheat from the Argentine which we repaid by a shipment of Australian wheat.

Senator LYNCH.—That was a war condition. The Minister has said that I made more applications for the payment of wheat instalments than, in his opinion, I should have done.

Senator RUSSELL.—The honorable senator was particularly prominent in asking for guarantees.

Senator LYNCH.—I was simply performing a public duty in asking for instalments that were a long time overdue.

Senator RUSSELL.—Never!

Senator LYNCH.—Yes, and they are overdue now.

Senator RUSSELL.—There was never a time when the Pool had not an overdraft through over-paying the farmers; that is the position to-day.

Senator LYNCH.—Wheat that was delivered in 1915-16 has not been completely paid for yet, and I think I am entitled to say that those instalments are well overdue. I am one of those to whom this money is due, and I presume that Senator Guthrie is another. Will the Minister say that sugar, or wool, or any other product, save wheat, that was delivered six years ago has not been paid for yet? When, in pursuance of my public duty, I asked for the payment of overdue instalments, it was not for the purpose of paying a wage of £9 per week, which Senator Crawford says he paid in his industry, but to pay a wage of something like £3 a week, to keep the home fires burning in the wheat belts, and to extend the area under crop.

Senator RUSSELL.—The honorable senator's object was laudable at the time.

Senator LYNCH.—Then the Minister should not have found fault with it. He spoke, also, of the Government having come to the rescue of the farmers by financing them during the war. My reply is that full interest was paid by the farmers on all the money which the Government advanced. Neither party is under any obligation; certainly the farmers are not.

Senator RUSSELL.—For three out of five years we took the risk of the guarantee.

Senator LYNCH.—The wheat was delivered, and wheat is as good as gold at any time, but especially during the war. In regard to the guarantee, the motion I introduced to the Senate asked that the Government should guarantee a fixed minimum of 5s. per bushel for five years, and if London parity should be above or below that price, the Treasury should be credited or debited to the extent of the difference in each year; 5s. was to be the standard price, but in no circumstances was the Treasury to lose by the transaction. The Government were merely to act as guarantors in order to put the wheat industry in a stable position. I shall not withdraw my request. The farmers do not seek a gratuitous gift such as this duty is. This is merely an attempt to put a fifth wheel on a coach. The proposed duty can be neither useful nor ornamental, and the farmers do not want it.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [9.50].—I am afraid that my earlier remarks have been misunderstood. I resented Senator Lynch talking about doles, and I pointed out that the Wheat Board for five years was an honorary body—

Senator LYNCH.—Mr. McGibbon, from Western Australia, was well paid for his attendance: £600 for four meetings.

Senator RUSSELL.—At the end of four years the farmers demanded representation on the Board, and it was granted. If a man is required to leave his farm in order to attend a meeting of the Board, I think he is fairly entitled to claim his expenses.

Senator DE LARGIE.—Does not the honorable senator think that £600 for attending four meetings is a rather stiff payment?

Senator RUSSELL.—I do.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—I must ask the Minister not to discuss the general question of the Wheat Board, but to confine his attention to the item immediately before the Chair.

Senator RUSSELL.—I felt constrained to reply to the statement made by Senator Lynch that the farmers were not whining for a duty. We have never required them to whine for anything. We have never exercised patronage so far as they are concerned. We have struggled to make payments to the farmers in respect of their wheat at the earliest possible moment. We went into debt to the extent of £20,000,000 in order to help them at a time when the weevil and mice were destroying their wheat. Senator Lynch has said that we are behind to-day in our payments. That is not so. The Wheat Board has never been behind in any of its payments. As a matter of fact, we have paid £7,000,000 more than we have received from the sale of wheat up to date, and have a bank overdraft to that extent. In such circumstances how can it be claimed that we are behind in our payments? In 1915-16 we had to buy large quantities of galvanized iron to keep the mice and the weevil out of the wheat stacks. We paid for that iron an average price of about £55 per ton, and to-day it is worth some hundreds of thousands of pounds. At the present moment there is probably £750,000 worth of iron and timber surrounding the wheat stacks, but no one can tell what it will bring

when we submit it to public auction. There is still a fraction owing in respect of the 1915-16 Pool, but as against it we have this splendid asset of iron and timber. The accounts of the Wheat Pool are audited by public accountants, and published from time to time. I do not believe in wheat scrip, and have always declined to express an opinion as to its value, since I object to gambling in foodstuffs. Day after day I am asked what wheat scrip is likely to bring, and the only answer I give is that the people should hold their scrip, because, as I have just said, I object to gambling in connexion with foodstuffs. The system of issuing scrip was started not by the Commonwealth, but by the States. Returning to the item under consideration, I would remind the Committee that the duty is an old one, and I believe it will be useful to us when we are negotiating for reciprocal Tariffs with other parts of the Empire. It might be of advantage to us when arranging a reciprocal Tariff with Canada. If, owing to serious drought, we had to import wheat we could make an arrangement with Canada to supply us, or arrange to supply Canada in time of need. No revenue is collected under this item, and the chances are that in the event of a serious drought the duty would be suspended. I ask the Committee to allow it to stand. In this Tariff there are many items which will assist us in making reciprocal arrangements with other countries. New Zealand, for instance, does not produce sufficient wheat to meet her requirements, and we might be able to make a reciprocal arrangement with that Dominion in regard to wheat and timber. At one time I found it impossible to get in Australia suitable timber for the making of butter boxes. Large quantities of New Zealand timber are used for that purpose, and we might offer to give New Zealand certain privileges in regard to our wheat in return for preferential treatment in respect of timber for butter boxes. Queensland pine is an excellent timber, superior to all others for certain purposes, but I have known Queensland butter to be tainted by the Queensland butter boxes.

Senator LYNCH.—Does the honorable senator think that such an item as this would be of any advantage in arranging for reciprocal trade relations with New Zealand. The New Zealand Government

would ask what such a duty was worth, and the honorable senator has just said that in time of drought it would probably be suspended.

Senator RUSSELL.—New Zealand cannot dictate to us what we shall do with our wheat. She has purchased from time to time considerable quantities of Australian wheat at very reasonable prices. When New South Wales some time ago had practically not a bushel of wheat for local consumption, we arranged to supply her with wheat from other States, not at the price we were charging the people overseas, but at the price ruling for it in the State of production plus freight.

Senator DE LARGIE.—And Western Australia had to accept less than the world's parity for its wheat.

Senator RUSSELL.—But it had a larger proportion for export. I hope that we shall not become parochial. Wheat produced in Australia should be available first of all for local consumption, and any surplus should be sold in the best available market. I am sorry that the question of the Wheat Board has been raised, but I felt constrained to reply to the statement made by Senator Lynch that the farmers did not come whining to the Government for a duty. I have never battled for any one so hard as I did to get an extra 6d. per bushel for the wheat-growers of the Commonwealth. I hope we shall retain this duty, since it will strengthen the hands of the Government in negotiating for reciprocal trade arrangements with other parts of the Empire.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [9.59].—The statement just made by the Minister (Senator Russell) calls for a reply. When a self-satisfied Minister contends that he has done a good thing for the farmers, it is well to remind him that there is no justification for his statement. This Government has not handled the farmers' wheat in a satisfactory way. They sold it for 4s. 9d. per bushel at a time when the British Government was guaranteeing 9s. 6d. per bushel, or the highest market value.

Senator GUTHRIE.—And the Victorian farmers are begging the Government at the present moment to handle their wheat for them.

Senator GARDINER.—If they are prepared to overlook the mistakes of the

past that is no concern of mine, but when a self-satisfied Minister, after mis-handling the farmers' wheat, claims that he has done well for them, it is necessary to reply to him.

Senator Cox.—How would the honorable senator handle the farmers' wheat?

Senator GARDINER.—I was a member of the first Government to form a Wheat Pool. Not only did the present Government sell the farmers' wheat at 4s 9d. a bushel when the British Government were guaranteeing 9s. 6d. a bushel, but they raised the freight on wheat carried in Commonwealth ships from 14s. per ton in 1914 to £7 10s. per ton. This meant an increase from 6½d. and 10½d. per bushel, as before the war, to 4s. 2d. per bushel; and why? It was in order that the farmers might not see that the freight was being increased so as to bring the wheat sold in Britain in line with the world's parity.

Senator GUTHRIE.—You are insinuating that there was a shortage of tonnage.

Senator GARDINER.—I do not insinuate anything of the kind, but there was no reason why, in respect of our own ships, the freight should have been increased to such an extent. It was simply a means of making the farmers pay in your years the cost of those ships, while the rest of the community went scot-free.

Senator RUSSELL.—Cornsacks were brought at 80s. on our own line when other boats were charging £15. We never at any time charged the farmers the full ocean rate.

Senator GARDINER.—Nevertheless, the farmers' wheat paid for the Commonwealth ships in four years, and that at a time when the farmers were "up against it" like every one else.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Was there no return freight?

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—All these matters cannot be discussed on the item of wheat.

Senator GARDINER.—But the Minister spoke as if he had conferred some great benefit on the wheat-growers, and I wish to show that those growers were treated by the Government in such a way as to make them pay the whole of the purchase money for the ships in four years. When the Minister discusses this question with an air of injured innocence, and pretends that the farmers are under

some great obligation, I tell him that the farmers have nothing to thank the Government for. The farmers got 4s. 9d. per bushel when the world's parity was at least 10s.

The CHAIRMAN.—The honorable senator must not discuss the question of freights.

Senator GARDINER.—It is remarkable that the Minister may travel all round the question, but as soon as I begin to answer him I am ruled out of order. I wish to discuss the matter from the point of view of the farmers, and I say that this duty is of no value to them, but is a mere pretence, and ought to be struck out. It is of no use Senator Russell saying that he desires the duty in order that he may negotiate with New Zealand or Canada; New Zealand sends no wheat here, and therefore the duty cannot affect the Dominion. I hope that Senator Lynch will stand to his guns, and that there are sufficient independent senators who will refuse to consent to this pretended Protective duty.

Senator RUSSELL.—How would the honorable senator sell wheat to New Zealand; would he treat the Dominion as a foreign country, or as a portion of Australasia?

Senator GARDINER.—If I entered into that question, the Chairman would call me to order.

Question.—That the request (Senator LYNCH's) be agreed to—put. The Committee divided.

Ayes	6
Noes	15
Majority	9

AYES.

Gardiner, A.	Rowell, J.
Guthrie, J. F.	
Henderson, G.	Teller:
Lynch, P. J.	Buzacott, R.

NOES.

Cox, C. F.	Pearce, G. F.
Crawford, T. W.	Plain, W.
Drake-Brockman, E. A.	Pratten, H. R.
Duncan, W. L.	Reid, M.
Earle, J.	Russell, E. J.
Keating, J. H.	Senior, W.
Millen, John D.	Teller:
Payne, H. J. M.	de Largie, H.

Question so resolved in the negative.

Request negatived.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [10.9].—I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to make sub-item (B), British, free.

I do not know how much barley comes here from Britain, but whatever does come ought to be admitted free. My desire is to see Free Trade with Great Britain, and no obstacle placed in the way by this Tariff.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap).—If there are no other requests in connexion with the British preferential Tariff column, I shall put the motion thus: That the House of Representatives be requested to make wheat, barley, and maize, sub-items A, B, and C, under the British Tariff free.

Request negatived.

Senator GUTHRIE (Victoria) [10.11].—I move—

That the House of Representatives be requested to amend sub-item (C) by making the duties, intermediate, 2s. 6d.; general, 3s. 6d.

I have been waited on by representatives of 86 per cent. of the maize growers of Victoria, who assure me that in this State the cost of growing maize is at the present time from 4s. 3d. to 4s. 6d. per bushel, including the cost of delivery to the nearest railway station. Those who are growing maize are mostly settled on small blocks, and their industry is threatened by the competition of black labour in South Africa, Java, and India, and especially of Java. Maize growing is an industry worthy to be encouraged with adequate protection. Australia should at least supply her own demand for maize, but she has hitherto been a large importer of that cereal. A good deal of maize is grown in Victoria, and, I think, in the northern States, too, by returned soldiers. The Tariff liberally protects the manufacturers of maize products, such as starch, glucose, and cornflour; but the growing of maize is not encouraged as it should be, and consequently in every State the area under crop has decreased considerably during the last ten years. The highly-protected manufacturers of maize products have in Victoria threatened the maize-growers that if they will not contract to sell the coming season's maize at 3s. 6d. a bushel they will get their supplies from Java.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Then we had better recommit the Tariff for the reconsideration of items like that dealing with glucose.

Senator GUTHRIE.—Maize growing gives employment to more labour per acre than any other crop, the cobs having to

be picked by hand. In the period between 1903 and 1913 the average price of maize in Australia was 3s. 6d. a bushel, but nowadays the cost of growing maize is twice what it was then. Yet the highly-protected manufacturers of maize products are trying to force the Victorian growers to sell forward at what was the average price nearly ten years ago, and, as I have stated, the present cost of production is between 4s. 3d. and 4s. 6d. per bushel. There are thousands of acres of land along our rivers suitable for maize growing, and if that land were put under maize it would lead to closer settlement, and give a great deal of employment. Australia's production of maize averages from 8,000,000 to 9,000,000 bushels annually, whereas the black labour of India produces 80,000,000 bushels, and that of South Africa 34,000,000 bushels per annum. In 1918, the last year for which figures are obtainable, we imported 255,000 bushels of maize. I do not know what Java's product of maize is, but it is from that country that it is now proposed to import supplies to compete with the locally-grown maize. It is wrong that a country like Australia, which can grow maize inferior to none, should import that cereal. The maize-growers asked for a duty of 4s., but I told them I thought that a little too much, and that I was prepared to support a duty of 3s. 6d.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [10.19].—I met the representatives of growers from the Snowy River and other maize-growing districts, but the only statement they made in support of their request for a higher duty was that a threat had been made by a particular firm that it would pay only a certain price for maize. I do not think that we can be governed by such statements. There are ways in which we can deal with those who make threats. The real trouble of the maize-growers was caused by the reciprocal Tariff arrangement with South Africa, under which maize could be imported at 1s. per cental. That maize was grown by black labour. We are not going to repeat our mistake. Under the present Tariff all imported maize will have to pay 2s. per cental. In addition, there is the consideration of freight.

Senator GUTHRIE.—The maize-growers desire adequate protection; and if it

amounted to 2s. per bushel, instead of 2s. per cental, no one would complain.

Senator RUSSELL.—The present duty is equivalent to a little more than 1s. per bushel, in addition to which, I repeat, there is the natural protection afforded by freight costs. The duty has to be paid upon the price at the port of shipment, plus 10 per cent. The rate now imposed amounts to 50 per cent.; and, if that degree of protection is not sufficient, what do the maize-growers want?

Senator CRAWFORD (Queensland) [10.23].—I support the request. Maize-growing involves more labour than the cultivation of any other grain. It cannot be carried on wholly with horses or by power implements. A great deal of the work must be performed by hand. There need be no hesitation about increasing the duty for fear that the price of maize might become exorbitantly high. For all purposes, except in regard to the manufacture of starch, maizena and glucose, maize comes into direct competition with other grains. No one would buy maize for horse-feed who could get oats, peas, or the like for very much less. Thus, there are safeguards against inordinately high prices. The Minister (Senator Russell) remarked that, in addition to the duty, adequate protection was afforded by freight costs. A number of Victorian growers waited on me and informed me that local manufacturers who use maize had announced their intention to import from Java. Freight can be obtained, or could have been secured recently, at 25s. to 30s. a ton. I doubt whether the maize grown on the Snowy River can be landed at Melbourne at lower transport cost. Considerable quantities of maize are grown in New South Wales, and a fair amount is cultivated in Queensland; but the companies which use maize for the manufacture of glucose and other products are all situated in Melbourne. Thus, the Queensland and New South Wales growers who might desire to dispose of their products to Melbourne manufacturers would have to pay actually higher freights than in respect of importations of maize from Java or South Africa. The alleged additional protection by way of freight may be, therefore, disregarded. Melbourne manufacturers are

very fortunate in having so large a market as is afforded by the more than 2,000,000 people in New South Wales and the 750,000 population of Queensland. I am strongly of opinion that the request should be agreed to.

Senator COX (New South Wales) [10.28].—Nearly all the maize land in New South Wales is very expensive. It is situated chiefly in river valleys, and among the disadvantages which growers have to face is the danger of periodical floods. These, if they are sustained, are likely to ruin the crops. The maize grown in the Tumut district is said to be the best in the world, in that it is weevil proof. There is also very fine maize grown on the Hawkesbury River lands. But all of these areas are apt to be flooded, and there are other disabilities to be contended with. Adequate protection should be afforded to assist maize-growers to carry on successfully.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [10.30].—I desire to voice the opinion of the great mass of people who are not in any way organized, and who are compelled to use maize as a fodder for their stock, particularly when other corn is not available. It is not very often that I fall back upon the returned soldier in support of my argument; but I may direct the attention of the Committee to the fact that Mr. Ashford, who was at one time Minister for Lands in New South Wales, and who has played a very important part in the Wheat Pool and "other things," did a great deal in the direction of establishing returned soldiers on poultry farms.

Senator Cox.—Fowls are not fed on maize.

Senator GARDINER.—There is no better winter food for fowls than corn.

Senator RUSSELL.—I think there is a possibility of a compromise.

Senator GARDINER.—It is about time, because surely we are not going to impose an additional duty in the interests of persons utilizing land in Victoria for maize-growing when it is more suitable for the production of cabbages. The land in the Darling Downs, the northern rivers, and the Tumut districts produces excellent maize, and much superior to that raised on the inferior soil in the State of Victoria, where the climate is

totally unsuitable for the production of this commodity. Those who are not banded together in companies and combines should be protected; and I am considering more particularly the poor unfortunate teamsters, who have to feed their horses well if they are to derive a satisfactory return from the business in which they are engaged.

Senator CRAWFORD.—All the carriers in Queensland are members of the Australian Workers Union.

Senator GARDINER.—That is another striking instance of the intelligence of the Queensland people.

Senator GUTHRIE. — The honorable senator represents the biggest combine in Australia — the Australian Workers Union.

The CHAIRMAN (Senator Bakhap). —Order! Honorable senators must not discuss the Australian Workers Union, but the item before the Committee.

Senator GARDINER. — The South African maize cannot compete with that produced in Australia.

Senator GUTHRIE.—Then why do we import so much of it?

Senator GARDINER.—It has been imported in times of drought to feed sheep that otherwise would have starved. The pastoralists have on frequent occasions been compelled to rely upon a supply of maize to keep their stock alive; and without an adequate supply, thousands of sheep would have starved.

Senator Cox.—Can the honorable senator tell us how maize is grown in South Africa?

Senator GARDINER.—I shall leave that to the honorable senator, who, with his extensive knowledge concerning a country he has visited, may be able to explain the process more accurately. Surely a duty of 50 per cent. is sufficiently high. I have seen good maize sold in New South Wales at 2s. per bushel.

Senator CRAWFORD.—It would not pay the grower at that price.

Senator GARDINER.—I do not know whether it paid the grower or not; but I believe that the present price is about 5s. per bushel. The Australian-grown maize is far superior to that produced in South Africa, and, in view of all the circumstances, I trust the Committee will not agree to increase what is already a high

rate, and thus place an additional burden upon the consumers.

Senator RUSSELL (Victoria—Vice-President of the Executive Council) [10.35].—I have listened to the strong representations which have been made by honorable senators, and if Senator Guthrie is prepared to amend his request to make the general Tariff 3s. per cental, instead of 3s. 6d., I shall be agreeable.

Senator GUTHRIE.—I am prepared to adopt the Minister's suggestion.

Request, by leave, amended accordingly.

Senator SENIOR (South Australia) [10.36].—During a visit to Queensland some time ago I had an opportunity of visiting the splendid country between Mareeba and Yungaburra, on the Atherton Tableland, where I saw large numbers engaged in maize-growing. There were very few barns, but large numbers of galvanized-iron tanks, which, I was informed, were utilized for storing maize. I was informed that although the maize does not grow to the same height as it does in the south, the plants stool more freely, and, as a result, a larger number of heads are grown on each plant. I was also informed that the majority of the maize-growers in that district were Chinese.

Senator CRAWFORD.—Most of that land has been resumed by the State, and sold to returned soldiers.

Senator PEARCE. — I inspected the country three months ago, when a deputation of white men engaged in the production of maize waited upon me.

Senator SENIOR.—I am not disputing that, but merely stating what I saw. I asked if the Chinese were owners of the land. The reply was, "No. The owners of the land dwell in the suburbs of Brisbane, and rent the land to Chinese."

Senator CRAWFORD.—The honorable senator heard a lot of fairy tales in Queensland.

Senator SENIOR.—It is a fact that there were Chinese cultivating the farms on the Atherton tableland at that time, because I saw them there.

Senator Cox.—The honorable senator is talking about conditions that prevailed three years ago, whilst the Minister for Defence has said that the Chinese have gone, and the land is now being worked by returned soldiers.

Senator SENIOR.—If the purpose of this duty is to protect white labour and maintain the White Australia policy, well and good; but if it is to help Chinese cultivators of maize, I cannot support it.

Senator REID.—How many Chinese were growing maize at Atherton?

Senator SENIOR.—I travelled between Mareeba and Yungaburra, a distance which represented a train journey of from one and a half to two hours, and on both sides of the line I saw what I have described.

Senator REID.—The whole Chinese population of Queensland, including the furniture makers, could not occupy such an area.

Senator SENIOR.—If this duty is intended to protect Chinese labour, it is not fair to the struggling farmers in the south, because the effect will be to make it more difficult for growers in the south to raise wheat. Since the time to which I have referred, I have seen a gentleman who came from Queensland to purchase chaff in the south for his starving stock.

Senator Cox.—None of the maize grown on the Atherton tableland goes to Victoria or South Australia.

Senator SENIOR.—We know that it does, and the imposition of this duty will make maize dearer to those who require it in the south.

Senator GUTHRIE.—No; it will mean that more maize will be grown, and the industry will be stabilized.

Senator SENIOR.—The honorable senator proposes that we should stabilize the maize-growing industry in the north at the expense of those engaged in agriculture in the south. We need to be very careful in dealing with this matter, because, very often, we need in the south the products of the north. The maize-growing industry, as I saw it in Queensland, does not require stabilizing, any more than does the growing of potatoes in the Western District of Victoria. It is very extensive; a large number of settlers are engaged in the industry, and on small farms. What I saw in Queensland certainly induced me to believe that maize-growing can be carried on in that State successfully under the existing duty.

Senator GARDINER (New South Wales) [10.47].—I have no wish to delay the Committee unnecessarily, but I wish to quote from a Queensland newspaper

statements in corroboration of that made by Senator Senior.

Senator REID.—What newspaper does the honorable senator propose to quote from?

Senator GARDINER.—From the *Dalby Herald*.

Senator REID.—Then it must be a reprint from another newspaper.

Senator GARDINER.—That may be so, but it corroborates the statement which was made by Senator Senior. The *Dalby Herald* says—

In the grazing industry the united graziers employ 700 coloured aliens, and in the sugar industry 2,000 coloured aliens are employed to-day.

I will stop the quotation at that, because I venture to say that if coloured aliens are employed in growing sugar they are also employed in growing maize.

Senator CRAWFORD.—An Act of Parliament prohibits their employment in the sugar industry, so that the statement quoted cannot be true.

Senator GARDINER.—The Arbitration Court award in Queensland permitted their employment in the sugar industry. I rose merely to corroborate Senator Senior's statement by a quotation from a Queensland newspaper. I say again that if 2,000 coloured aliens are employed in cane-growing, it is quite certain that a number of them are also employed in maize-growing.

Request, as amended, agreed to.

Item agreed to, subject to a request.

Progress reported.

PAPER.

The following paper was presented:—

Shale Oil Bounty Act.—Particulars of Bounty Paid, &c., Financial Year 1920-21.

ADJOURNMENT.

TARIFF BILL.

Senator PEARCE (Western Australia—Minister for Defence) [10.50].—In moving—

That the Senate do now adjourn,

I ask honorable senators to recognise that next week we shall have to ask them to sit a little later, and possibly in the following week to sit in the mornings. To-day we have passed only five items out of 400 odd in the schedule.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Senate adjourned at 10.51 p.m.

Members of the House of Representatives.

Speaker—The Honorable Sir Elliot Johnson, K.C.M.G.

Chairman of Committees—The Honorable John Moore Chanter.

Anstey, Frank .. Bourke (V.)	Hughes, Right Hon. William Bendigo (V.)
³ Atkinson, Llewelyn .. Wilmot (T.)	Morris, P.C., K.C.
⁷ Bamford, Hon. Frederick Herbert (Q.)	Jackson, David Sydney Bass (T.)
William	Johnson, Hon. Sir Elliot, Lang (N.S.W.)
Bayley, James Garfield .. Oxley (Q.)	K.C.M.G.
Bell, George John, C.M.G., Darwin (T.)	Jowett, Edmund .. Grampians (V.)
D.S.O.	⁵ Kerby, Edwin Thomas Ballarat (V.)
Best, Hon. Sir Robert Kooyong (V.)	John
Wallace, K.C.M.G.	Lamond, Hector .. Illawarra (N.S.W.)
Blakeley, Arthur .. Darling (N.S.W.)	Lavelle, Thomas James Calare (N.S.W.)
Blundell, Hon. Reginald Adelaide (S.A.)	Lazzarini, Hubert Peter Werriwa (N.S.W.)
Pole	Lister, John Henry .. Corio (V.)
Bowden, Eric Kendall .. Nepean (N.S.W.)	Livingston, John .. Barker (S.A.)
Brennan, Frank .. Batman (V.)	Mackay, George Hugh .. Lilley (Q.)
Bruce, Stanley Melbourne, Flinders (V.)	⁸ Mahon, Hon. Hugh .. Kalgoorlie (W.A.)
M.C.	Mahony, William George Dalley (N.S.W.)
Burchell, Reginald John, Fremantle (W.A.)	Makin, Norman John Hindmarsh (S.A.)
M.C.	Oswald
Camron, Donald Charles, Brisbane (Q.)	Maloney, William .. Melbourne (V.)
C.M.G., D.S.O.	Marks, Walter Moffitt .. Wentworth (N.S.W.)
Catts, James Howard .. Cook (N.S.W.)	Marr, Charles William Parkes (N.S.W.)
Chanter, Hon. John Riverina (N.S.W.)	Clanan, D.S.O., M.C.
Moore	Mathews, James .. Melbourne Ports (V.)
Chapman, Hon. Austin .. Eden-Monaro (N.S.W.)	Maxwell, George Arnot .. Fawknor (V.)
³ Charlton, Matthew† .. Hunter (N.S.W.)	¹ McDonald, Hon. Charles Kennedy (Q.)
⁴ Considine, Michael Patrick Barrier (N.S.W.)	⁶ McGrath, David Charles Ballarat (V.)
Cook, Right Hon. Sir Parramatta (N.S.W.)	McWilliams, William James Franklin (T.)
Joseph, P.C., G.C.M.G.	Moloney, Parker John .. Hume (N.S.W.)
Cook, Robert .. Indi (V.)	Nicholls, Samuel Robert Macquarie (N.S.W.)
Corser, Edward Bernard Wide Bay (Q.)	Page, Earle Christmas Cowper (N.S.W.)
Cresset	Grafton
Cunningham, Lucien Gwydir (N.S.W.)	¹⁰ Page, Hon. James .. Maranoa (Q.)
Lawrence	Poynton, Hon. Alexander, Grey (S.A.)
Fenton, James Edward .. Maribyrnong (V.)	O.B.E.
⁸ Fleming, William Mont-Robertson (N.S.W.)	Prowse, John Henry .. Swan (W.A.)
gomerie	Riley, Edward .. South Sydney (N.S.W.)
⁹ Foley, George James .. Kalgoorlie (W.A.)	Rodgers, Hon. Arthur Wannon (V.)
Foster, Hon. Richard Wakefield (S.A.)	Stanislaus
Witty	¹¹ Ryan, Hon. Thomas West Sydney
Fowler, Hon. James Perth (W.A.)	Joseph, K.C. (N.S.W.)
Mackinnon	Ryrie, Sir Granville de North Sydney
Francis, Frederick Henry Henty (V.)	Laune, K.C.M.G., C.B. (N.S.W.)
Gabb, Joel Moses .. Angas (S.A.)	Smith, Hon. William Denison (T.)
Gibson, William Gerrard Corangamite (V.)	Henry Laird
Greene, Hon. Walter Richmond (N.S.W.)	Stewart, Percy Gerald .. Wimmera (V.)
Massy	Story, William Harrison Boothby (S.A.)
Gregory, Hon. Henry .. Dampier (W.A.)	Tudor, Hon. Frank Gwynne Yarra (V.)
Groom, Hon. Littleton Darling Downs (Q.)	³ Watkins, Hon. David .. Newcastle (N.S.W.)
Ernest	Watt, Right Hon. William Balaclava (V.)
Hay, Alexander .. New England (N.S.W.)	Alexander, P.C.
Higgs, Hon. William Guy Capricornia (Q.)	West, John Edward .. East Sydney (N.S.W.)
Hill, William Caldwell .. Echuca (V.)	Wienholt, Arnold .. Moreton (Q.)
	Wise, Hon. George Henry Gippsland (V.)

1. Sworn 27th February, 1920.—2. Sworn 3rd March, 1920.—3. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 4th March, 1920.—4. Made affirmation, 5th March, 1920.—5. Election declared void, 2nd June, 1920.—† Sworn 11th May, 1920.—6. Elected 10th July, 1920. Sworn 21st July, 1920.—7. Appointed Temporary Chairman of Committees, 13th May, 1920.—8. Expelled and seat declared vacant, 12th November, 1920.—9. Elected 18th December, 1920. Sworn 6th April, 1921.—10. Decease reported, 3rd June, 1921.—11. Decease reported, 2nd August, 1921.

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* Appointed 14th April, 1921.

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* Resigned 12th May, 1921.—† Appointed 19th May, 1921.—‡ Deceased reported 3rd June, 1921.